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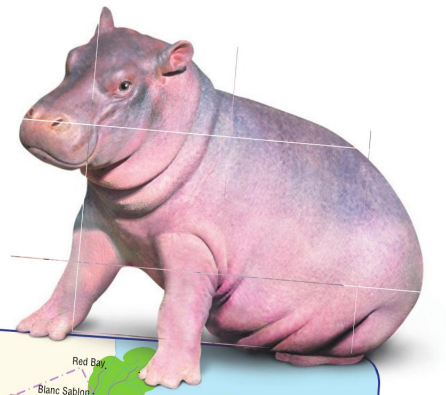

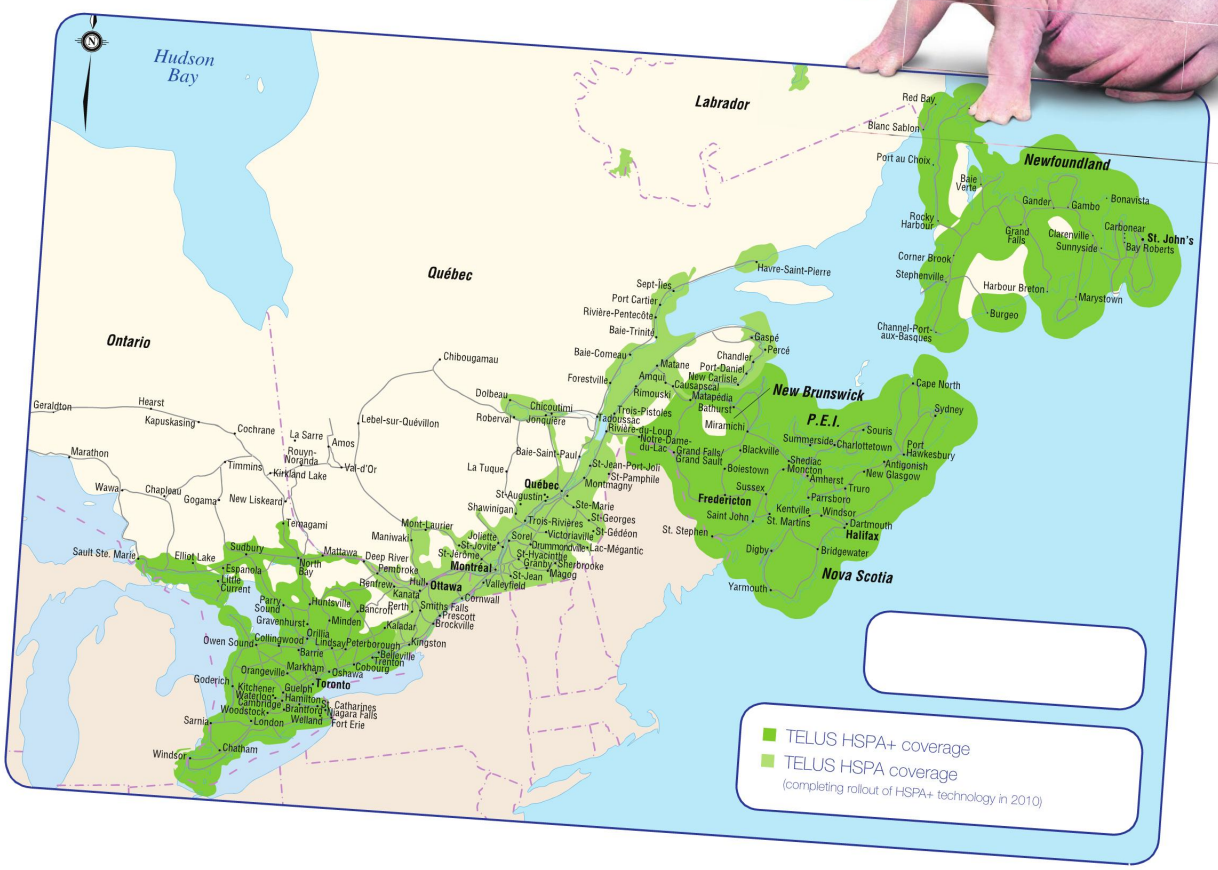

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Cops seek help with hit-and-run

COLLISION After towing and inspecting a vehicle over the weekend, police continue to seek the public's assistance in identifying a vehicle of interest in connection with a fatal hit-and-run last month.

On Nov. 27, a motorcycle and car collided at Richmond Road and High Street, killing a 44-year-old man.

The vehicle of interest is described as a light silver or grey four-door vehicle believed to be an Acura 3.2 TL. The vehicle may have dents or damage in the area of the lower right-side passenger doors. Police are interested in speaking with the owner or driver of this vehicle as they may have valuable information relating to this incident.

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

News on the Move
What's this barcode for?
Learn how to scan the barcode with the instructions at the top of pg 3
metronews.ca
SCANLIFE

Health pg 18

Popping pills can be painful

On the web
Visit metronews.ca for news updates

Torch relay **Sendoff**

POWER DWOLNIK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Andrew Knisley, left, passes the Olympic flame to Kerry Piccinetti in front of the Chateau Laurier downtown yesterday. Knisley lost his leg while serving in Afghanistan in January 2009 and was released from the hospital just two weeks ago. Knisley and Piccinetti were the first two torchbearers on this day as the torch began to make its way to Cornwall.

Canada hoodwinked

Yes Men pull prank at Copenhagen climate conference

The news release read too good to be true.

Canada, a laggard at these climate talks, was announcing a radical shift, ready to embrace a 40 per cent cut in its emissions by 2020 versus its 1990 levels, and 80 per cent by 2050 — the toughest of any country.

The release looked official. It had the logo for Canada's environment ministry. It included a link to a mock Wall Street Journal article that said a walkout by developing nations at the UN climate talks led to Canada's more ambitious targets.

Until now, Canada has said only that it would reduce its emissions 20 per cent from 2006 levels — one of the lowest targets offered by rich countries.

"The idea was to confuse the Canadian government, which set up a war room to positively spin their position ... even though everyone here knows that their position is a cruel joke."
Mike Bonanno, Yes Men member

These new targets? A mirage. A hoax perpetrated by pranksters who call themselves The Yes Men.

They told The Associated Press they wanted to expose what they said was Canada's failure to take tough action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

"The idea was to confuse the Canadian government, which set up a war room to positively spin their position in the debate even though everyone here knows that their position is a cruel joke," said Yes Men member Mike Bonanno.

They also created a link to a video on a fake UN climate site in which a woman identified as a Ugandan delegate held a news conference praising the Canadian commitments.

The hoax was the talk of the Canadian media covering the climate talks in Copenhagen. When Canada's Environment Minister Jim Prentice arrived for a news conference, he found himself answering questions about the episode instead of speaking about his country's efforts to fight global warming.

The Yes Men, featured in the documentary The Yes Men Fix the World, have become infamous for embarrassing climate skeptics and other industrial giants.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Wife's love was 'not reciprocated'

TIM WIECLAWSKI
tim.wieclawski@metronews.ca

MURDER Two years after officiating the wedding of Donna Ellen Jones and Mark Peter Hutt at Our Lady of Fatima Roman Catholic Church, Father Jeff King presided over Jones-Hutt's funeral yesterday, while her husband stands accused in her murder.

Around 300 people attended the service yesterday morning to pay their last respects. Jones-Hutt's closed casket stood in front of the altar.

Donna Ellen Jones-Hutt

There was no eulogy delivered at the service, but Father King, friends, and family read Bible verses. King quoted a passage about love from 1 Corinthians that he had read at the couple's wedding ceremony.

He said Jones-Hutt loved in the same way that was described in the passage, but that sadly, it was "not reciprocated."

Her body was interred at Hope Cemetery in south Ottawa.

According to police, Jones-Hutt was found dead in the couple's Barwell Avenue home Dec. 6. She would have celebrated her 34th birthday on Dec. 25.

Last Friday, Ottawa police arrested Mark Hutt, 33, following an investigation and autopsy. He appeared in court on Sunday charged with second-degree murder.

This is the city's seventh homicide of the year.

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Local

City man arrested in robbery

An Ottawa man appeared in court yesterday to face charges of robbery and obstructing police following a personal robbery in a Montreal Road parking lot Sunday. City police said yesterday a 28-year-old female parked her vehicle and was about to enter her apartment building when a male suspect approached her and demanded the keys to her vehicle. A short struggle ensued. Police later arrested a male matching the description of the suspect. Andre Joseph Wolfe-Bard, 22, appeared in court yesterday. METRO OTTAWA

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News in brief

ROAD SAFETY Ottawa police, through the city's Integrated Road Safety Program, laid 411 charges against drivers for failing to stop at red lights and 10 charges against drivers for failing to use reserved transit lanes properly last month.

PARAMEDICS The Professional Paramedic Association of Ottawa is asking drivers to slow down and leave extra space between their vehicles and others, especially while driving by motor vehicle collisions. METRO OTTAWA

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What's online today.

Your Money Allan Small offers a look at what 2010 may hold for investors at **metronews.ca/investing**

Lotteries

Ontario Pick 3: 277; Ontario Pick 4: 4347
Encore: 3794915
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These results are not official.

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PAWEL DWULIT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

More than 70 vehicles were involved in a multiple vehicle pileup yesterday on Highway 416 northbound at Bankfield Drive. Early morning fog and ice are said to be the cause of the collisions.

Ice, fog blamed for 70-vehicle pileup

Stretch of Hwy. 416 closed for almost six hours

TIM WIECLAWSKI
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Ontario Provincial Police were forced to close a six-kilometre stretch of Highway 416 in south Ottawa to sort out a massive 70-vehicle pileup yesterday morning.

OPP Const. Guy Prevost said investigators are still trying to determine what caused the first vehicle to lose control, but poor visibility and icy road conditions contributed to many vehicles going into the ditch.

Sarah Houlihan was on her commute to Ottawa through "a good East Coast fog," when she saw "a wall of red tail lights" looming a few hundred metres ahead.

Houlihan got her car stopped, but others weren't so lucky.

"We're quite surprised by the number of vehicles, but it was during rush-hour traffic so that's what made it so heavy," said Prevost.

The northbound lane of Highway 416 between Roger Stevens Drive and Bankfield Road was closed from around 7:30 a.m. until around 1 p.m.

Banks of ice fog ghosting over Highway 416 dropped visibility to zero during the morning commute. Vehicles piled into each other in two separate areas about half a kilometre apart, while others skidded off the slick pavement into ditches or snowbanks.

"There was a lot of cars with heavy damage, like their whole front end was gone, and cars that were totalled because they were being hit by different vehicles," said Prevost. "There were some pretty fierce collisions, but people ended up pretty good out of this."

Prevost said it was fortunate there were no tractor-trailers involved in either of the two wreck sites.

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

Injuries

- There were no serious injuries reported, but Ottawa paramedics transported six people to hospital, said spokesman J.P. Trottier.

Roving clinics open for H1N1 flu shots

Flu Outbreak

After closing the city's mass vaccination clinics Saturday, Ottawa Public Health opened the first of a series of roving clinics designed to administer vaccinations against H1N1 in various locations across the city yesterday.

While the city saw a decline in the demand for the mass immunization setting over the last week or so, it also saw "a spike in demand" for the vaccine in the days leading up to the close of the clinics, said Ottawa's associate medical officer of health Dr. Vera Etches.

"With the announcement that the clinics were closing, maybe they thought it was their last chance," Etches said. "But now we're focusing on other routes. There are opportunities for them to be immunized through roving clinics."

Since the first clinic opened to priority groups Oct. 26, the city has vaccinated about 425,000 people, amounting to about 50 per cent of the population, Etches said. And as the days go on, Ottawa Public Health is hoping people will get their vaccines at a roving clinic or through their physicians or workplaces, bringing the total number of vaccinated people even higher.

"We're continuing to recommend the vaccine for those who haven't gotten it yet," said Etches.

The second wave of the illness is over, but it's impossible to predict what will happen, as flu season lasts until April.

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

Series schedule

- A full schedule of clinics to come is on the city's website. Wristbands may be re-employed at those clinics experiencing high volumes to minimize wait times.

Museum contract set for vote

Canadian Museum of Civilization and Canadian War Museum workers, who have been on strike since Sept. 21, are voting on a new contract this morning.

Negotiators with the Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation and the Public Service Alliance of Canada reached a tentative agreement late Sunday night.

If the employees ratify the new contract, the museum and the union will start negotiating to have them return to work, said CMCC spokeswoman Chantal Schryer.

Schryer said that all programming should return to normal fairly quickly, but for the moment they are focused on getting all the employees back to work.

TIM WIECLAWSKI/METRO OTTAWA

Strike issues

- The 85-day strike revolved around job security and the contracting out of work.

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Hire Immigrants Ottawa is accepting entries for the 2010 Employer Excellence Awards from employers who have demonstrated leadership in recruiting and integrating immigrants in the workplace. For info, visit www.hireimmigrantsottawa.ca. METRO OTTAWA

United Way helps kids to healthy lunches

It's long been known that children can't learn at their best when they're hungry.

But hundreds of Ottawa families are sending their kids to school without proper lunches.

"It's a reality for families living in family shelters," said Peggy Austen, senior director of community services for United Way Ottawa.

Yesterday, United Way Ottawa and the Grocery Foundation officially launched a pilot program that will provide children living in family shelters the opportunity to make healthy lunches for school and learn about the benefits of a nutritious diet.

In 2008, there were 1,179 kids and youth living in emergency shelters, said Austen.

The program has been implemented in two family emergency shelters in the city, including Forward Family Shelter and Carling Family Shelter.

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

News in brief

ROBBERY Police have charged a young offender in relation to a bank robbery. Police said a male entered the TD Canada Trust bank on Montreal Road Saturday. A 16-year-old Ottawa male appeared in court yesterday on charges of robbery and breach of probation. METRO OTTAWA

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Police cleared in Cape Breton man's death

The RCMP says an investigation into the police shooting death of a Cape Breton man last year has found no wrongdoing. John Simon died after he was shot by an RCMP officer at a home on the Wagmatcook First Nation reserve on Dec. 2, 2008. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada

Liberal big wig aims for mayor gig

The national director of the federal Liberal party has put his name on the ballot for the Toronto mayoralty race in October 2010. Rocco Rossi, left, has already resigned as the party's top administrator and fundraiser, effective Dec. 31. In announcing his candidacy yesterday outside Toronto City Hall, Rossi spoke in Spanish, French, Italian and English to declare: "I'm big, I'm bald and I've got bold ideas for the city." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Senators' flying perks top MPs'

Upper chamber OK's taxpayer-funded international flights

Senators have quietly expanded their opportunities to jet around the globe, courtesy of Canadian taxpayers.

A new policy, adopted last May, gives denizens of the upper chamber international travel privileges not enjoyed by their elected counterparts in the House of Commons.

It enabled Liberal Senator Lillian Dyck, for instance, to embark last month on a visit to her late father's ancestral home in China.

By senators' own admission, few politicians anywhere in the world are entitled to such a perk.

Details of the policy change are contained in transcripts of meetings of the Senate's bipartisan internal economy committee, which governs the upper chamber's operations. The transcripts are posted publicly on the Senate's website but have gone largely unnoticed until now.

$1,776.53

Liberal Senator Lillian Dyck billed Canadian taxpayers $1,776.53 for her air fare to China last month.

They offer a fascinating glimpse of senators' perception of their entitlements and their awareness of the potential for a public backlash. For instance, during one meeting in October, Liberal Senator Paul Massicote railed against the fact that some senators habitually fly business class.

"I have personally asked several senators and they have told me that they travel economy when they are paying for the ticket themselves but business class when the taxpayers are paying," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Asbestos lobby gets federal funds

Go Green

SKEPTICS Ottawa has been funding an asbestos lobby group that promotes the work of prominent climate-change skeptics.

The revelation comes as Canada's delegation struggles to avoid being cast as the villain at the Copenhagen climate conference, and environmentalists are urging the government to stop financing the group.

On its website, the Chrysotile Institute promotes a chapter that it says debunks the asbestos health-risk hoax from the 2007 book titled Scared to Death — From BSE to Global Warming: Why Scares Are Costing Us the Earth.

But Chrysotile Institute president Clement Godbout says his organization actually has no position about the book's chapter on climate change.

He says his group is only promoting the book for outlining how the science of asbestos, and its potential health risks, have been systematically exaggerated by the "anti-asbestos lobby."

The book was written by prominent British newspaper columnist Christopher Booker and co-author Richard North.

Ottawa has been frequently knocked by opponents for cutting cash to organizations that believe in fighting climate change.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sierra Club

- The Sierra Club of Canada now urges the government to stop funding the Chrysotile Institute, which has received more than $20 million from the federal government since 1984.

Quebec **PQ MLA Bouchard resigns**

JACQUES BOISSINOT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Parti Quebecois MLA for the riding of Vachon, Camil Bouchard, pauses as he announces his resignation as member of the National Assembly, yesterday at the legislature in Quebec City. The 64-year-old cited the frustration of life in opposition as his reason for quitting.

Gene mutation raises Jewish women's cancer risk: Study

HEALTH A study of Jewish women in Ontario has found that about one per cent carry a genetic mutation that dramatically raises their risk of breast and ovarian cancer, yet more than half of those identified would be ineligible for DNA testing under current provincial guidelines.

About 40 per cent of ovarian cancers and 12 per cent of breast cancers in women of Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry (Jews of Eastern European origin) occur because of these mutations and are potentially preventable with surgery or drug intervention. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Diplomat allegedly spat at cop

TANZANIA A Canadian diplomat has been called home from Tanzania after allegedly spitting at a police officer.

Tanzania's foreign minister identified Jean Touchatte, a private secretary at the Canadian High Commission, as the official involved in the Dec. 9 incident.

The Tanzanian government said Touchatte spat at the policeman during a traffic jam in the Indian Ocean city of Dar es Salaam. He was questioned by police but later released because of diplomatic immunity. Media outlets also reported that he spat at a journalist who attempted to interview him at the police station.

"We regret the incident that took place," High Commissioner Robert Orr said in a statement late Sunday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

FARMING As agricultural experts met in Copenhagen on the weekend to gingerly build consensus on agriculture's role in climate change, some farmers in Canada offered another solution to farming's cost on the environment — change the way farming is practised.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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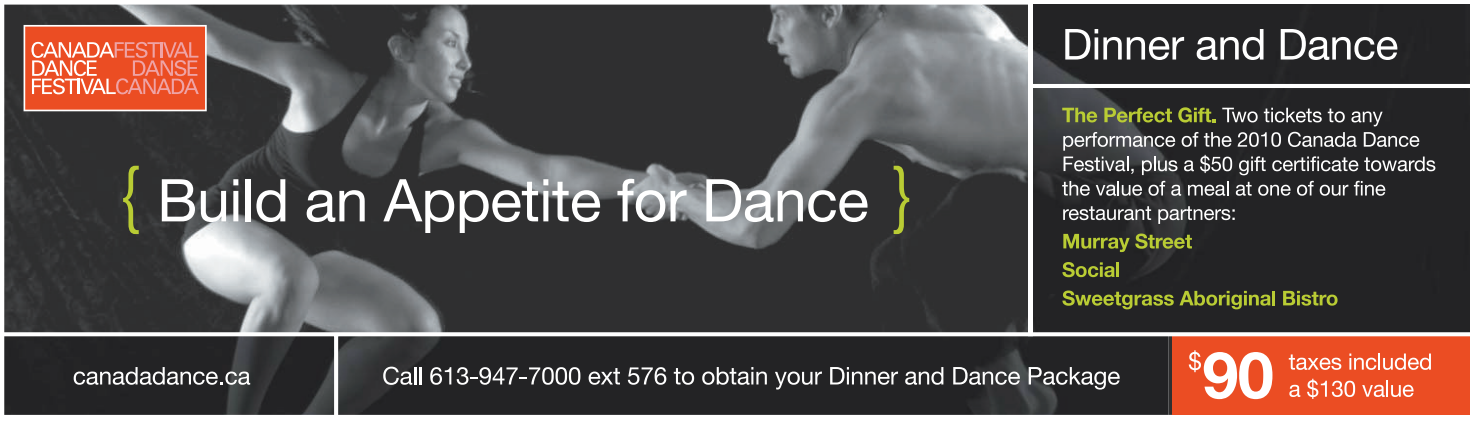
SCANLIFE

Haiti's new prime minister arrives in Ottawa today with an unusual message: Haiti is open for business, and Canada is ready to help. Scan this barcode for the full story.



Violent protests at Canadian-owned mine in Mexico expected
The death of a Mexican activist who strongly opposed the presence of a Canadian company in his hometown is predicted to spur violent protests this week, with supporters already furious over his slaying suggesting a weekend clash at another Canadian-owned mine is a sign of things to come. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sydney, N.S. **Community mourns death of boy**

ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

James Delorey's family, friends, his dog, Chance, and search personnel look on yesterday as the seven-year-old's casket is taken from a church in Sydney, N.S. The child had wandered from his home last week and spent two nights lost in the woods. Delorey died later in a Halifax hospital.

Deported alleged extremist missing

BELIZE Officials in Belize don't know what happened to an alleged Sikh extremist who made global waves when he bought a passport for the tropical paradise after being ordered out of Canada.

Iqbal Singh

Iqbal Singh has quietly vanished.

Ten years ago next month, Singh left Toronto for the Central American fun-and-sun destination.

His arrival in an unsuspecting Belize caused a media sensation. The spotlight glare was apparently intense enough to drive Singh from the oasis he found upon paying about $50,000 US for a passport through a since-cancelled immigrant investor program.

At the time, flummoxed Belizean officials said they hadn't been warned about the terror allegations against Singh.

These days, they're not sure how to find him.

"We're not certain where Mr. Singh is at this time," said Insp. Bert Bowden of the Belize police department's Joint Intelligence Co-ordinating Center. "But he no longer resides in Belize."

Singh was suspected of belonging to the Babbar Khalsa, a terrorist group intent on establishing a separate Sikh homeland.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Certificate struck down, suspect freed

Syrian-born Almeri arrested on terror charges 8 years ago

A federal judge has struck down a national security certificate against a Syrian-born man arrested eight years ago on terror suspicions.

The ruling today by Federal Court Justice Richard Mosley effectively frees Hassan Almrei.

The government had been trying to deport Almrei on a security certificate — a seldom-used provision of the immigration law for removing suspected terrorists and spies.

Almrei's lawyer, Lorne Waldman, said from Toronto his client was "very excited" about the ruling. Waldman had not yet read the full decision, and said he and Almrei would comment later.

The government argued the Syrian native's travel, activities and involvement in a false-document ring were consistent with supporters of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

The ruling says there were reasonable grounds to believe Almrei was a security danger when detained in October 2001, but there are no longer reasonable grounds to believe that today.

It also says federal cabinet ministers breached their duties of "good faith and candour" to the court by not thoroughly reviewing the information on file prior to re-issuing the certificate against Almrei in February of last year.

The case is another in a series of blows to the security certificate law. The federal government has launched a sweeping review after acknowledging the system needs fixing.

The review could scrap or revamp the law used to arrest and deport non-Canadians considered a threat to national security.

Certificates have existed for three decades, and more than two dozen have been issued since 1991, when they became part of federal immigration law.

But recent cases have slowed to a crawl — or collapsed altogether — amid legal challenges and upbraidings from judges over miscues by Canada's spy agency.

Among critics, the deportation tool has come to symbolize the worst excesses of the fight against Islamic extremism. Opponents say the process is fundamentally unfair because detainees are not given full details of the allegations against them. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Certificate cases

- The government has initiated just six certificate cases — four terror suspects, a hatemonger and an alleged Russian spy —since the 9-11 attacks on the United States.

News in brief

TRAIN RESCUE RCMP say a 29-year-old man came close to freezing to death after jumping onto a slow-moving train in central Alberta.

THE CANADIAN PRES

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Higher charges for payday loans could be good for business: Watchdog
American-based payday loan companies will move into Ontario in a big way now that the province has set an "astronomically high" maximum charge of $21 for every $100 borrowed, the Ottawa-based Public Interest Advocacy Centre warned yesterday. Ontario's new maximum fee for payday loans kicks in today. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quick deal unlikely in Yukon pension talks

Federal and provincial governments are trying to hash out a way to encourage Canadians to save more for retirement.

But getting the different levels of government to agree on how best to do that, and to hatch a plan without alienating the powerful financial-services sector, will likely take far more than the day and a half set aside for such matters in Whitehorse this week.

"This may not be an immediate crisis that we're facing in Canada, but it's one that is coming at us," Colin Hansen, British Columbia's finance minister, said in an interview.

The global financial crisis of the last two years has exposed the weaknesses of the country's pension system. Now there's a growing consensus that major reforms need to be made.

In Whitehorse, Hansen wants to see all provinces and Ottawa recognize that reforms are necessary. But he also wants to see a timeline for discussions and, if possible, an agreement that the Canada Pension Plan should serve as the cornerstone of reforms.

Ottawa, however, is trying to lower expectations.

"The fundamental result that we expect ... is to provide the information that both the federal finance minister and the other finance ministers need, to make informed decisions," said Ted Menzies, the parliamentary secretary of finance, who has led consultations on pension reform.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pensions declining: Studies

- Recent studies have shown that almost two-thirds of working Canadians have no workplace pension plan. And almost one-third of Canadian families have no retirement savings whatsoever. Plus, the percentage of Canadians covered by defined benefit pension plans has declined rapidly.

Safety **Check your head**

PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Test technician Patrick Richard displays a ski helmet tested at the Canadian Standards Association International Laboratory in Montreal in this April 2009 file photo. According to Safe Kids, international data show head injuries account for between three and 15 per cent of injuries to skiers and snowboarders, but make up 87 per cent of deaths. Victims of head injuries sustained while taking part in winter sports, as well as their families, are lobbying to make helmets mandatory.

News in brief

POWER Alberta's energy minister says the province is open for business for nuclear power plants. Mel Knight says the government will look at proposed nuclear power plants on a case-by-case basis, but it will not help fund them or promise to buy the energy.

TERROR U.S. prosecutors had fresh accusations yesterday against a Canadian charged with helping to plot a terrorist strike in Denmark, alleging he knew about last year's deadly Mumbai attacks several days in advance. The new allegations emerged a day before the continuation of Tahawwur Rana's bail hearing in Chicago.

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Senate wants feds to boost Northwest Passage control

TRANSPORT The Senate wants the government to beef up control of the Northwest Passage by monitoring small vessels sailing its waters and ensuring the Coast Guard's Arctic ships have the necessary muscle to enforce Canadian law.

"There's not enough being done here," said Sen. Bill Rompkey, chairman of the committee that delivered its final report yesterday. "Time is running out. "If you think security is expensive, try chaos."

Rompkey's committee has been travelling the Arctic for months to make recommendations on the role of the Coast Guard in waters rapidly becoming more accessible as sea ice disappears.

The report echoed an interim document released last spring. But it expressed alarm at how slowly Tory promises for the region are being fulfilled.

> **"If you think security is expensive, try chaos."**
> Sen. Bill Rompkey

It notes that while Prime Minister Stephen Harper promised in August 2008 that all large vessels in the passage would be required to report to Transport Canada's NORDREG registry system, those laws won't be enacted until next year.

The government should take action even if the U.S. — which considers the passage to be international waters — objects, Rompkey said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nunavut woman found frozen to death after walk

IQALUIT The frozen body of a Nunavut woman who didn't return from walking her three dogs has been found.

The RCMP in Iqaluit say Lindsay Hudson's body was found on a road outside the territorial capital Saturday afternoon.

Her two German shepherds were still at her side; a smaller dog had returned on its own.

Hudson left her apartment Friday at noon and the RCMP were called by her roommate when she didn't return after several hours.

Dozens of searchers on foot and on snowmobile looked for her throughout the night as temperatures dipped to –20 C before the wind chill.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Falling televisions killing, injuring more children
The number of children killed or injured by falling TV sets is increasing, even as people are replacing clunky older models with lighter flat-screens, a new study says. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS 9

World

Nations end boycott

Developing countries walked out over emissions

Go Green

Poor countries ended a boycott of UN climate talks yesterday after getting assurances that rich nations were not conspiring to soften their commitments to cutting greenhouse gases, European officials said.

European Union environment spokesman Andreas Carlgren said informal talks resolved the impasse, which was started by African countries and backed by major developing countries, including China and India.

Rich and poor countries "found a reasonable solution," he said. Developing countries agreed to return to all working groups that they abandoned earlier in the day at the 192-nation conference, said Anders Frandsen, a spokesman for conference president Connie Hedegaard.

A person dressed as death on horseback and holding a scythe rides outside parliament in Copenhagen yesterday.

The boycott had disrupted efforts to forge a pact on global warming and forced the cancellation of formal working groups, delaying the frantic work of negotiators trying to resolve technical issues before the arrival of more than 110 world leaders, including U.S. President Barack Obama, later this week.

The move was largely seen as a ploy to shift the agenda to the responsibilities of the industrial countries and make emissions reductions the first item for discussion today.

Poor countries, supported by China, said Hedegaard had raised suspicion that the conference was likely to kill the Kyoto Protocol. The United States withdrew from Kyoto over concerns that it would harm the U.S. economy and that China, India and other major greenhouse gas emitters were not required to take action.

China is now the world's largest greenhouse gas polluter.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Argentina **Students protest dean's election**

ROLANDO ANDRADE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A student throws a stone toward police to protest the re-election of the Buenos Aires University dean outside Congress in Buenos Aires, yesterday. Students consider the election illegal, claiming that the council that elects the dean lacks sufficient student representation.

Women drowned, not raped and killed: Police

KASHMIR An Indian police agency investigating the deaths of two women in Kashmir said yesterday they drowned and were not raped and killed as alleged by locals, a ruling likely to further fuel anti-India sentiment.

The deaths of 22-year-old Neelofar Jan and her 17-year-old sister-in-law Asiya Jan in May ignited violent protests in the Himalayan region, where militant groups have fought Indian forces for independence or a union with Pakistan since 1989.

More than 68,000 people, mostly civilians, have been killed in the uprising and subsequent Indian crackdown. The two women disappeared as they walked home from their family's apple orchard in Shopian, a town 60 kilometres south of Indian Kashmir's main city Srinagar.

Local authorities first said the women drowned when they found their bodies one kilometre apart along a shallow stream on May 30, but police later said the two had been raped and killed.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Sully auctions off hat

Capt. Chesley (Sully) Sullenberger has auctioned one of his pilot's caps for $5,800 US and will donate the proceeds to three San Francisco Bay area public schools. The signed hat — which was not worn the day Sullenberger safely landed a disabled jet into New York's Hudson River — drew 68 bids on eBay. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Obama challenges U.S. banks

Invokes bailouts while imploring institutions to increase lending again

U.S. President Barack Obama challenged top bankers yesterday to explore "every responsible way" to increase lending, saying they were obliged to help after being rescued by taxpayers.

In a statement after more than an hourlong meeting with the executives, Obama said he reminded them that much of the financial crisis that took the U.S. banking system to the brink of collapse had been "of their own making."

He also exhorted the executives — both in private and in public — to drop their opposition to an overhaul of the nation's financial industry.

"If they wish to fight common sense consumer protections, that's a fight I'm more than willing to have," Obama told reporters at the White House.

He also urged lenders to find creative ways to free up lending. Obama said banks have benefited from bailouts and should use that strength to lend more money to consumer and businesses.

"But given the difficulty businesspeople are having as lending has declined, and given the exceptional assistance banks received to get them through a difficult time," he said, "we expect them to explore every responsible way to help get our economy moving again."

"Given the exceptional assistance banks received to get them through a difficult time, we expect them to explore every responsible way to help get our economy moving again."
U.S. President Barack Obama

Delay, he said, was not an option he was willing to consider as his administration has focused on digging out an economy that has left more than 15 million Americans out of work. Many Americans resent the help the government gave to wealthy bankers while seeming to ignore their difficulties.

Bank of America chief executive Kenneth Lewis pledged to Obama that his bank would lend $5 billion US more to small- and mid-sized businesses in 2010 than it did in 2009. The bank said the move is part of a broader effort to support an economic recovery.

JPMorgan said last month that it would boost such lending by $4 billion US.

Obama's stern lecture came hours after Citigroup Inc. said that it was repaying $20 billion US in bailout money it received from the U.S. Treasury Department, in an effort to reduce government influence over the banking giant. The government will also sell its stake in the company.

The New York-based bank was among the hardest hit by the credit crisis and rising loan defaults and got one of the largest bailouts of any banks. Wells Fargo & Co. remains the last national bank that has yet to pay back its bailout money.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ukraine **Activists protest soccer meeting**

EFREM LUKATSKY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Security guards stop an activist from the women's group FEMEN from climbing a barrier in Kiev yesterday, prior to the opening of a UEFA soccer meeting. FEMEN is a movement campaigning against sex tourism and the trafficking of women in Ukraine.

Crisis worsening in Sudan: Medical group

AFRICA At least 2,000 people have died and 250,000 have fled their homes following violence in southern Sudan this year, worsening a humanitarian crisis in a region seeking its independence, officials from a medical aid group said yesterday.

Officials from Médecins Sans Frontières, or Doctors Without Borders, said this year's violence is the worst since the signing of a 2005 peace deal between south Sudan and the north, an agreement that ended two decades of civil war.

The group's operations director in Sudan, Stephan Goetghebuer, said the 2009 killings are different from past violence in the south that was linked to land clashes and cattle rustling. This year, villages have been attacked, and raiders have targeted and killed women and children, he said.

The group said that 87 per cent of the people it treated this year were victims of gunshot wounds, but that the number of people killed in the violence is three times higher than the number of wounded.

2,000
Estimated number of people killed by violence this year in southern Sudan.

"There are very few survivors. People are killed massively," Goetghebuer said.

Goetghebuer said aid group officials don't yet understand the underlying reasons for the attacks. MSF has been working in Sudan for 30 years.

Sudan could face huge political upheaval next year that risks re-igniting the country's civil war as the south prepares to vote for independence in early 2011. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

FIJI Three Fijians are dead, several people are missing and thousands are homeless after a tropical cyclone battered the South Pacific nation yesterday, causing flooding, damaging homes and trees, and disrupting power supplies, officials said. Cyclone Mick, Fiji's first this season, ripped through the island of Viti Levu. Mick struck up to six hours earlier than expected, catching many people unprepared, said Tim Sutton of UNICEF. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Plea deals in penis gluing

WISCONSIN Two women accused of seeking revenge on a cheating lover by gluing his penis to his stomach have reached plea deals.

Therese Ziemann, 48, was accused of doing the actual gluing. She pleaded no contest yesterday to reduced charges of disorderly conduct and misdemeanour battery. Her sister, 43-year-old Michelle Belliveau, pleaded no contest to disorderly conduct.

The women allegedly lured the 37-year-old man to a motel and tied him to a bed in July. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Residents moved after volcano stirs

PHILIPPINES Authorities moved thousands of villagers from harm's way near the Philippines' most active volcano yesterday after it oozed lava and shot plumes of ash, and said they probably will spend a bleak Christmas in an evacuation centre. Volcanologists raised the alert level on the 2,460-metre Mayon volcano overnight. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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More funds pledged to ward off Asian carp

U.S. officials say they'll use $13 million in Great Lakes restoration funds for efforts to prevent invasive Asian carp from entering Lake Michigan. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HATEM MOUSSA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tens of thousands of supporters attended a rally yesterday in Gaza, marking the 22nd anniversary of Hamas. The militant group was founded in 1987 during the first Palestinian intifada, or uprising.

Thousands back fiery Hamas leader at rally

Hamas mobilized tens of thousands of supporters yesterday for an anniversary rally meant to show the militant Islamic organization still has support despite Israel's devastating military assault on Gaza last year.

The crowd responded with chants of "We won't recognize Israel" to a fiery speech by Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh, who said the movement scored a "divine victory" against the Jewish state and will not lay down its arms.

Despite the defiant words, Hamas has sharply curtailed rocket fire on Israeli border towns since last winter's Israeli offensive, which inflicted heavy losses on the militants.

"Brothers and sisters, we will not be satisfied with Gaza."
PM Ismail Haniyeh

And, in a departure from last year's rally, Hamas did not taunt Israel over the soldier it is holding captive, Sgt. Gilad Schalit, whom the militants hope to trade for hundreds of Palestinians held by Israel. It appears Hamas didn't want to jeopardize the prospects of a German-mediated prisoner swap.

Hamas was founded in 1987 during the first Palestinian uprising against Israel. It seized Gaza from Western-backed Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in 2007 and has since tightened its control despite a crippling border blockade by Israel and Egypt.

Haniyeh struck a hard line, saying Hamas would not recognize Israel or call off armed struggle "until the Palestinian people achieve freedom and independence."

"Brothers and sisters," he said, "we will not be satisfied with Gaza. Hamas looks toward the whole of Palestine."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Arkansas court approves secular holiday display

CRÈCHE TEST A secular display celebrating the winter solstice and "freethinkers" such as Albert Einstein and Bill Gates can be placed at the Arkansas state capitol alongside a Christmas nativity scene, a federal judge said yesterday.

The Arkansas Society of Freethinkers sued last week after Secretary of State Charlie Daniels rejected its proposal, saying it wasn't consistent with the Capitol's decorations and displays. The group asked for a quick hearing before the winter solstice on Dec. 21.

U.S. District Judge Susan Webber Wright granted an injunction yesterday allowing the display to go up.

The group never wanted to remove the nativity display, said Tod Billings, president of the Freethinkers. He said he hoped the display would go up tomorrow and remain in place until the nativity scene is removed after the holidays.

"We just wanted the freedom to be included in the holiday celebrations publicly, just like anybody else can do if they fill out the appropriate paperwork," said Billings.

The society proposed a 2.4-metre-high plywood display that would detail the history of the solstice. It would also include photos of people it considers "freethinkers," such as Einstein, Gates and Eleanor Roosevelt.

"As the old year passes and a new year is born, we reflect on that which has passed and hope for a better tomorrow," the proposed display reads. "May the light of reason be a beacon to a brighter future for us all." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. presses China to release activist

SILENCED The U.S. has urged China to release a high-profile dissident who called for political change. It is also pushing Beijing to allow all activists to petition their government.

State Department spokesman Ian Kelly said yesterday the U.S. is worried that Liu Xiaobo and other Chinese citizens may have been detained or harassed because they signed a charter demanding democratic change and respect for human rights. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

NUCLEAR TALKS An upcoming meeting by five world powers on curbing Iran's nuclear program has been cancelled at China's request, senior officials from three of the countries said yesterday. One official cited scheduling conflicts. The five now plan to talk by phone on Dec. 22. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Comment

What's MacKay's future?

NationalReport
Lawrence Martin

metronews.ca/nationalreport

In the Afghan detainee controversy, Peter MacKay's stonewalling and roughhouse takedown of a diplomat was characteristic of this government whenever it is accused of anything. Did the defence minister have any choice but to respond in the way he did?

If, in fact, he had a free hand and chose the stealth route, then yes, MacKay should resign. If his line of defence was dictated from above, then it becomes a tougher call. As he made clear yesterday, he will not step down. But in the rumoured cabinet shuffle, he should be moved out of defence.

MacKay is one of several holders of big portfolios who has stumbled. He is part of a starless cabinet, an unlit galaxy except for the one and only, the prime minister himself.

Environment Minister Jim Prentice has been beaten up for his inactivity on global warming, inactivity that sees this country collecting fossil-of-the-year awards. But has the foot-dragging been his doing? Apparently, it's the PM who has prevented him from taking swifter action. Before environment, Prentice held the thankless Indian affairs portfolio, where his main task was to ditch the Kelowna accord. Considered a future leadership contender, he has hardly been able to burnish his credentials.

Peter MacKay

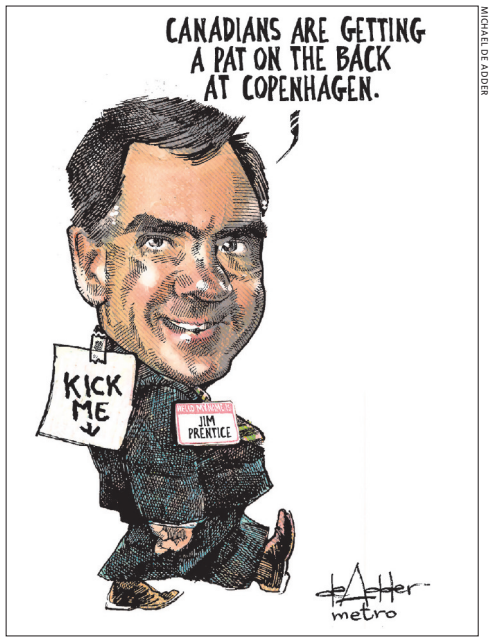
Finance Minister Jim Flaherty has had a better year than ones previous. But he has been dragging around a lot of chains — the income trust flip-flop, the disastrous fiscal update of last year and his repeated underestimating of the federal deficit. Again the question needs to be asked — how many of the calls were his own?

The prime minister has some breathing room on the political calendar and could move one, all or none of the above. Strong performers like Immigration Minister Jason Kenney and Trade Minister Stockwell Day could be promoted. Long-serving Justice Minister Rob Nicholson, who is to the right of Sarah Palin, could be moved as well as Transport Minister John Baird, the Commons court jester who specializes in drubbing opponents. Taking him on is like arguing with a brass band.

One likely move will see Maxime Bernier, the former foreign minister who resigned after getting caught up in the biker-girl, lost-documents scandal, brought back to cabinet because he is popular in Quebec.

But no one is too excited about any pending changes. Usually, cabinet shuffles are a big deal. Not in Harperland. In his cabinets no one gets to be a heavyweight. They all bob around, waiting for the word from on high.

Lawrence Martin is a journalist and author of 10 books who writes about national affairs from Ottawa.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Views

Afghan detainees: A moral dilemma

InStep
Christine Williams

After the recent bout of public scrutiny over accusations by former senior Canadian diplomat Richard Colvin about Ottawa's indifference toward the torture of detainees in Afghanistan, we need to recall that, in 2005, former prime minister Paul Martin gave the thumbs up to then-defence minister Bill Graham to negotiate a detainee transfer agreement with the Afghanistan government.

At the root of this ongoing dilemma of how to process these detainees is our high regard for human rights: The golden element that keeps a robust flock of immigrants and refugees coming our way. Human rights is the cornerstone of our democracy. For this reason, we hold our authorities to a higher moral standard, having delegated ourselves the responsibility of being international role models, but we need to do so with understanding.

For instance, most of us can not fathom the routine atrocities committed by many foreign regimes such as the Taliban, such as: Shooting eight boys to death because they laughed at Taliban fighters, mutilations, beatings, gang rapes and the torture of women and children; burning entire families alive. More frightening is that these atrocities represent the vision these barbaric insurgents hope to export to other parts of the world, with their deep-seated hatred and opposition to Western values.

Based on these facts, we need to appreciate that justice would be better served if groups like Amnesty International would up the ante in renouncing the heinous deeds of an enemy that has gone so far as to hide among civilians and disguise its members as emergency and media personnel.

These unlawful combatants are not protected by the Geneva Conventions, even though there are those who argue they should be. And they most certainly do not fall under our Charter of Rights of Freedoms. However, Justice Anne McTavish did rule that Afghan detainees do have rights under their own constitution and international law.

Given the prior floods of accusations about the Western lack of respect for the sovereignty of foreign governments, how do we justify bypassing Afghanistan's own rules of engagement, albeit primitive? According to Brig.-Gen. Daniel Menard, progress is happening as Afghan authorities are being receptive to Canada's advice on how to treat detainees.

We need to exercise patience and support of ongoing efforts to work out a moral solution concerning these detainees.

Christine Williams is the producer and host of the live current affairs daily talk show On the Line at CTS TV in Burlington, Ont.

Worth mentioning

Tunes that get you in holiday shopping mood

For many holiday shoppers, the only thing worse than the crowds and endless lineups is the Christmas music.

But next time you roll your eyes at yet another mall rendition of Jingle Bell Rock, think of Kym de la Roche. She's been listening to Christmas music since about August.

As a member of Holt Renfrew's creative department in Toronto, de la Roche is responsible for compiling the store's Christmas playlist. Compiling a good Christmas playlist isn't easy, either — not only do good holiday songs come in short supply, de la Roche must also ensure that every tune falls "in line with the Holt Renfrew DNA."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Top 10 songs

Here are Kym de la Roche's picks this year for the 10 best Christmas songs to shop to:

1 The Ventures — Sleigh Ride
2 Badly Drawn Boy — Donna & Blitzen
3 Band Aid — Do They Know It's Christmas?
4 Eartha Kitt — Santa Baby
5 The Dandy Warhols — Little Drummer Boy
6 Matt Dusk — Cool Yule
7 Otis Redding — Merry Christmas Baby
8 Any song on A Charlie Brown Christmas by Vince Guaraldi Trio
9 Martha Wainwright — Merry Christmas and Happy New Year
10 Edith Piaf — Le Noel de la Rue

We Know What You're Thinking

45% The percentage of Canadians who say the festive season is the most stressful time of year.

IPSOS REID

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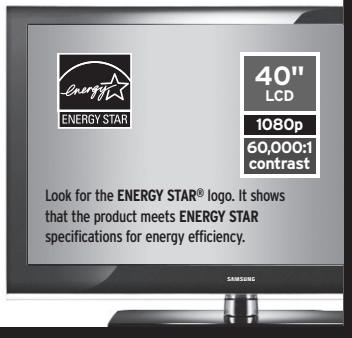

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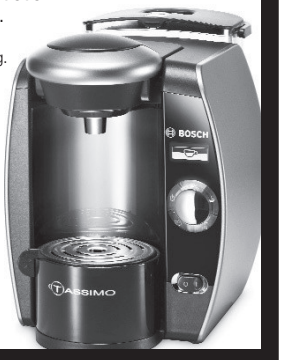

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Sale prices and offers end Thursday, December 24, 2009 unless otherwise stated, while quantities last

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RBC Dominion advisers allegedly aided tax evasion
Canada Revenue Agency alleges investment advisers at a branch of RBC Dominion Securities Inc. helped clients set up offshore accounts that were used to evade taxes, CBC News Online reports. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Business

DOLLAR	GAS	OIL	TSX
US 94.40¢	US $5.249	US $69.51	11,545.69
US 0.05¢	US 8.6¢	US $0.36	121.76

EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Deeper in debt

Report shows Canadians owe more than ever before

The latest report on household debt from Statistics Canada carries a sober message: Collectively, Canadians are deeper in debt than ever before.

But economists say that record-low interest rates mean that debt loads are still manageable and will likely improve as the economy begins to recover from the depths of the recession.

The StatsCan report, released yesterday, comes on the heels of a stern warning about rising debt issued last week by the Bank of Canada.

Surging stock markets pushed up Canadians' net worth in the third quarter, StatsCan said in its report. Canada's premier stock market, the S&P/TSX Composite Index rose 9.8 per cent in the third quarter. That's on top of a 19 per cent gain in the previous three months.

Household net worth, the value of families' assets such as cars, homes, savings accounts and investments, minus what they owe, reached $5.72 trillion at the end of September, StatsCan said.

That's an increase of 2.3 per cent, marking two quarters of gains after three consecutive drops.

But household debt, mainly mortgages and consumer credit, also went up. It rose from July to September as Canadians rushed to take advantage of low interest rates to buy cars, homes, renovate and shop. Personal sector liabilities rose to $1.41 trillion, up 1.6 per cent.

"Falling mortgage rates, along with increased sales of existing homes and renovations, sustained increases in mortgage demand," StatsCan said. "Strength in auto purchases led to a further increase in consumer credit."

The result is a record debt-to-income ratio of 145 per cent, the agency said. That means for every $100 of income, Canadians owe $145. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

National worth

- Canada's national net worth, which includes business and government assets and liabilities, fell 1.3 per cent to $5.89 trillion as governments and consumers took on more debt, the report said.

Toyota Meet the new Prius

KOJI SASAHARA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Toyota Motor Corp. executive vice-president Takeshi Uchiyamada shows off the company's Prius Plug-in Hybrid in Tokyo, yesterday. Toyota unveiled its new plug-in hybrid, packed with a more powerful battery called lithium-ion that's different from the batteries used in Prius hybrids on roads today. It's available for leasing this month in Japan, the U.S. and Europe, while Toyota promised the car for sale to regular consumers by 2011 at an "affordable" price.

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ScanLife

Abu Dhabi keeps Dubai afloat with a $10-billion injection to help its neighbour cover debt payments. Scan this barcode for the full article.

Business in brief

BAILOUT Citigroup Inc. said yesterday it is repaying $20 billion US in bailout money it received from the Treasury Department, in an effort to reduce government influence over the banking giant. The government will also sell its stake in the company.

OIL Exxon Mobil will buy XTO Energy in an all-stock deal worth $31 billion US as the American oil giant moves aggressively to capitalize on the growing supply of natural gas at home. The deal, announced yesterday, could signal a new rush to own natural gas assets by major integrated producers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Higher interest rates headed this way next year, says RBC

MONEY The Royal Bank says Canadians can expect to be hit by higher interest rates in the second half of next year and in 2011.

Royal Bank economists say the Bank of Canada will be among the next group of central banks to move off floor-low rates, with the Canadian bank's overnight rate finishing 2010 at 1.25 per cent.

And RBC economists say they believe the trend-setting rate could rise to as much as 3.5 per cent in 2011.

The bank rate has been at 0.25 for most of 2009, a rate that is encouraging borrowing, but also raising concerns that Canadians may be overextending themselves.

The Royal Bank says Canada has not suffered as badly as other economies in the recession, and will be among the first, after Australia and Norway, to start raising rates.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

GDP increase

- According to a new forecast by RBC Economics, real gross domestic product is predicted to rise by 2.6 per cent next year and will continue to expand in 2011, at a 3.9 per cent clip.

New wireless provider Wind Mobile to set up presence in Blockbuster stores

PHONES New wireless phone company Wind Mobile has allied itself with movie and game rental chain Blockbuster Canada and will begin sales from outlets in Toronto and Calgary in the near future.

Wind Mobile said yesterday it has begun providing information on its mobile phone services initially in 13 stores in Toronto and three in Calgary, with sales set to start some time in the near future. Wind Mobile's parent company Globalive received word on Friday that it can begin operating within days after Industry Minister Tony Clement overturned a CRTC decision that prevented the Toronto-based company from launching.

"We're moving as quickly as we can," said Wind Mobile spokesman Rick Byun. "It's been quite a ride." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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FREIGHT & TAXES NOT INCLUDED

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$1,000	$112
$3,000	$97

$4,350
CASH CREDIT
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AWD model shown††

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DOWN	BI-WEEKLY
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$1,000	$126
$3,000	$111

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Monthly payment and cost of borrowing will vary depending on amount borrowed and down payment/trade. Freight and taxes are not included for bi-weekly payment. Bi-weekly payments based on a purchase price of $13,778/$15,648/$17,498 with $0/$1,000/$3,000 down payment. ♦♦♦7'2 Offers apply as indicated to the purchase of 2008 and 2010 new or demonstrator models of the vehicle equipped as described. Offers apply to qualified retail customers in the Ontario Pontiac Buick GMC Dealer Marketing Association area only (excluding Outaouais). Dealer order or trade may be required. Dealers are free to sell individual prices. Limited time offer which may not be combined with other offers. See your dealer for conditions and details. ♣Based on 2009 Natural Resources Canada Fuel Consumption Guide. 2010 ratings based on GM testing in accordance with approved Transport Canada test methods. Your actual fuel consumption may vary. Excludes other GM models. ♣♣5 government star ratings are part of the NHTSA's New Car Assessment Program (www.safercar.gov). Only vehicles tested at 35 mph (56 km/h) frontal crash test and 38.5 mph (62 km/h) side crash test. Ask your dealer for more details. ¥Safe & Sound Plan includes 5 years of OnStar Directions & Connections and 1 year of OnStar Safe & Sound (1-888-466-7827) or visit onstar.ca for OnStar's Terms and Conditions, Privacy Statement and details and system limitations. ††GMAC will pay the first two months' GMAC finance payments for finance terms up to 60 months only, pickup to a maximum monthly finance payment of $400 (tax included). Offer applicable to equal monthly payment finance agreements with GMAC and subject to GMAC credit approval. License, insurance, registration and administration fees not included and may be payable upon signing. Program not available to recipients of any previous GM student/graduate offer. 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See dealer or gm.ca for additional details. ▼▼To qualify for GM Canada's Cash For Clunkers incentive, you must qualify for the Retire Your Ride Program, supported by the Government of Canada, and you must turn in a 1995 model or older vehicle that is in running condition and has been registered and insured for the last 6 months (12 months in B.C.). Upon Government confirmation of vehicle eligibility under the "Retire Your Ride Program", GM Canada will provide an incentive towards the purchase or lease of a new 2009 or 2010 GM vehicle, excluding Medium Duty trucks, in an amount ranging from $500 to $3,000, depending on the model purchased. Incentive applied after taxes. If you successfully complete the "Retire Your Ride" program, you will be eligible for a $300 cash incentive. By participating in this program you will not be eligible for any trade-in value for your vehicle. GM Canada's Cash For Clunkers incentive is only available to customers who take delivery between November 3, 2009 and January 4, 2010. GM Canada's Cash For Clunkers offer may not be combined with certain other incentives available on GM vehicles, including the 60 Day Satisfaction Guarantee. See your participating GM dealer for additional program conditions and details. Residents of Northwest Territories, Yukon or Nunavut are excluded from the Government's Retire Your Ride program and are therefore ineligible for GM Canada's Cash For Clunkers incentive. Some conditions apply. Visit www.retireyourride.ca for more information.

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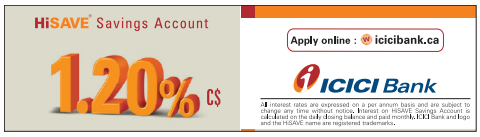
Your Money

EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA



RRSP season looming

Investing

What should investors think this RRSP season?

If interest rates rise next year, anyone with loans tied to the prime rate (variable loans) will see higher interest rate charges.

Regarding investments themselves, anyone who is in a fixed rate security like a bond, could see the price of that security fall. Bond funds or other managed products that invest in fixed income securities could see prices fall. Please remember for those that own individual fixed income securities like individual government or corporate bonds, your pricing will be affected as well but if you own these products to maturity, you will get your original investment back (face value).

A slow interest rate increase should not influence fixed income products too much at first. The environment for this year will still be great for individual investors to grow their portfolios.

Allan Small can be reached at asmall@dundeesecurities.com The views expressed are not necessarily those of Dundee Securities

Most memorable gifts

AlisonOnMoney

A few days ago I was thinking about the most memorable gifts I've ever received. Interestingly, there wasn't a purchased one on the list. Here are some of my top picks to give you a few ideas as the final countdown to Christmas begins.

A few days after my husband and I lost a beloved dog, a friend dropped off a gift basket for us which cheered us up immeasurably.

She's a single working parent with two young boys so money isn't exactly plentiful. But everything was perfect. There were hand picked flowers, several jars of jam made by one of her boys and some biscuits for our other dog. It brought tears to our eyes.

My sister works in theatre — not exactly the richest field — so she paints lovely cards which I use year round and I always receive the nicest comments when I send them out.

A dear friend gave me homemade body scrub last year smelling wonderfully of honey and lavender. She's a busy woman with a television career and I appreciate the time she spent in her kitchen making my gift.

My husband's late godfather specialized in making electrical fixtures out of found items. Every Christmas he gave us a whimsical lamp which cost him nothing but time.

When my husband was an impoverished college student he made me a sand cast candle in the colours of the season with cute decorations imbedded in it. No diamond ring could have won my heart more quickly than his slightly tilted, red wax tower.

Note to guys: Forget the mall. Make something for your best beloved and she will swoon with surprise and delight.

The secret to thoughtful but inexpensive presents is putting a little effort into the conception and execution of the gift. The ads are screaming 10 shopping days left until Christmas! Consider instead 10 thinking and doing days left until Christmas.

Alison's Money Rule:

- With gifts, the thought really does count. Dip into your time instead of your wallet and the results will be inexpensive and memorable.

Alison Griffiths is a financial journalist, author and host of Maxed Out on the W Network. Write to her at alison@alisongriffiths.ca.

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Tips for philanthropic Canadians

MoneyMatters

Q I would like to make a donation but also maximize my tax situation. Do I have to make my donation before the end of the year or can I contribute before Feb. 28, 2010? Are there any limits to my gift?
— Randy

A For a 2009 tax deduction, charitable donations must be made before the end of the year. A 15 per cent tax credit is allowed on the first $200 with amounts over $200 at 29 per cent tax rate. Partners should combine their donation and utilize the five-year carry-forward period to maximize the deduction. Annual deductions are limited to 75 per cent of net income with excess amounts carried forward.

Nicola Elkins, CEO and founder of Benefaction Foundation and author of Master your Philanthropy, has some tips for philanthropic Canadians:

- Make gifts of securities instead of cash. Receive a tax credit for donation and pay no capital gains tax.
- Limit tax for estate by gifting your RRSP or RRIF. Naming a charity as beneficiary for your RRSP or RRIF can eliminate tax.
- Executives should consider donating optioned stock. Like public securities, donated portion may incur no capital gain tax.

Henry Choo Chong, CGA, can be reached at choochonghcga@yahoo.ca.

'Tis the season for resolutions

The holiday season can be wonderful, but also financially stressful. According to Jeffrey F. Schwartz, executive director of Consolidated Credit Counseling Services of Canada, more Canadians every year start off January with a massive debt on their shoulders.

"According to current research by financial institutions, almost half a million Canadians are behind on credit card payments by 90 days or more. That's three months worth of interest charges that are snowballing," said Schwartz.

He notes that if you don't deal with your holiday debt at the start of the year, the situation can get out of control.

"Almost half a million Canadians are behind on credit card payments by 90 days or more."
Jeffrey F. Schwartz

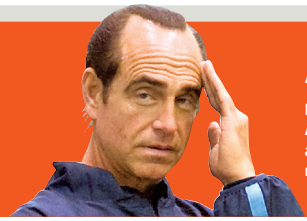
Schwartz has six suggestions for an action plan:

- Aim to pay down debt as soon as possible — paying interest is just giving money away.
- Sit down with your family and write out a budget.
- Total up the amount you owe on each credit card.
- Decide how you want to tackle your debt until balances are paid in full, whether it's better budgeting, household cutbacks or making extra income.
- Paying off the highest interest rate debt first. Move to other debt from there.
- Write down what you are spending. By keeping track of financial transactions, a pattern will appear and it becomes easier to pinpoint and stop bad habits.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Fitzgerald hurt
Arizona star receiver Larry Fitzgerald left the Cardinals game against the San Francisco 49ers with a sprained right knee. Fitzgerald was hurt on the third play of the third quarter last night when he tried to catch a deep pass from Kurt Warner. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sports



Argos dump coach

Bart Andrus has paid the price for a 3-15 season. The Toronto Argonauts have fired the first-year head coach after finishing as the worst team in the CFL. The 51-year-old Andrus was named the Argos' 40th head coach on Jan. 16.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

Sens fall short in Toronto

NHL

Senators 2 Leafs 3

AT

Francois Beauchemin scored the winning goal as Toronto edged the Ottawa Senators 3-2 last night, giving the Maple Leafs their first win in three attempts this season over their provincial rivals.

Phil Kessel scored a beautiful goal for Toronto, besting Ottawa goalie Brian Elliot with a sharp shot to the short side on a breakaway. Jason Blake also scored for Toronto, while Mike Fisher and Jason Spezza replied for Ottawa.

Vesa Toskala made 22 saves, helping the Leafs (12-14-7) win their fourth consecutive home game in front of 19,315 fans at Air Canada Centre. Toskala has now won four of his last five starts, including four straight at ACC.

Beauchemin's game-winner came just over six minutes into the third period after Spezza had pulled the Sens even on a power play. He fired a hard, low shot that found the net.

Ottawa appeared to tie the game with 35 seconds left, but the referees waved the goal off when it was determined Jesse Winchester kicked the puck into the net.

Spezza's goal came after he took a pass from captain Daniel Alfredsson at the side of the net, hesitated for the puck for a moment, then slid it under Toskala to make it a 2-2 game.

The goal was just Spezza's fifth of the year and only his second on the road.

Toronto held a one-goal lead heading into the third period thanks to second-period goals from Blake and Kessel, who has scored in two consecutive games and 12 through 21 games this year.

Blake opened the scoring when he tore down the right side and slid a weak backhander through Elliot just 2:15 into the period.

Ottawa (16-12-4) got that one back when Fisher whacked home a loose puck Tomas Kaberle failed to clear from the side of the Toronto goal. Toskala had made a nice save on Foligno, who cut to the middle of the ice on a 2-on-1 and fired a hard shot from the slot.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

ABELIMAGES/GETTY IMAGES

Toronto's Vesa Toskala makes a save on Ottawa's Nick Foligno last night in Toronto.

m.metronews.ca

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Learn how to scan the barcode with the instructions at the top of pg 3

Halladay trade headlines busy day in major leagues

Baseball's hot stove started sizzling yesterday, with Roy Halladay, John Lackey, Hideki Matsui and Mike Cameron all set to switch teams.

The Phillies have a tentative agreement to acquire Halladay in a trade with Toronto, and the former Cy Young Award winner was in Philadelphia yesterday for a physical required to complete the deal. Philadelphia also was discussing a trade that would send Cliff Lee, another former Cy Young winner, to Seattle.

Roy Halladay

The retooling Red Sox made two key moves in one day, reaching tentative agreements on a five-year contract with pitcher John Lackey worth $80 million to $85 million US and a two-year deal with outfielder Mike Cameron for about $15 million.

World Series MVP Hideki Matsui decided to head west, reaching a preliminary agreement with the Los Angeles Angels on a one-year contract worth about $6.5 million.

Halladay has been coveted by top clubs for months, and the commissioner's office granted a 72-hour window on Sunday for Toronto and Philadelphia to complete their trade, a baseball official familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press yesterday.

Philadelphia could give up pitchers J.A. Happ, Joe Blanton and outfielder Dominic Brown as part of a deal, the person said. Those three players also took physicals in Philadelphia. Lee, who like Halladay is eligible for free agency after next season, could wind up going to the Mariners, the baseball official said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Toronto 3 OTTAWA 2
Florida 7 N.Y. Islanders 1
Philadelphia 3 Boston 1
Atlanta at N.Y. Rangers
Nashville at Columbus
Buffalo at Montreal
Phoenix at Detroit
Los Angeles at Vancouver

TODAY'S GAMES
Philadelphia at Pittsburgh, 7 p.m.
Calgary at St. Louis, 8 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Nashville, 8 p.m.
Columbus at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
Washington at Colorado, 9:30 p.m.
Los Angeles at Edmonton, 9:30 p.m.

NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Philadelphia 117 Golden State 101
Orlando 106 Indiana 98
Boston at Memphis
New Orleans at Dallas
Minnesota at Utah
Oklahoma City at Denver
Washington at L.A. Clippers

TODAY'S GAMES
New Jersey at Cleveland, 7 p.m.
New York at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Toronto at Miami, 7:30 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Detroit at Houston, 8:30 p.m.
San Antonio at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
Sacramento at Portland, 10 p.m.

NFL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Arizona at San Francisco

Sports in brief

INVESTIGATION A coach on Canada's long-track speedskating team is under investigation in the Netherlands after allegations of trying to buy a spot in the 5,000-metre race at the 2006 Olympics. Ingrid Paul and Dutch skater Gretha Smit have been accused of offering Poland's Katarzyna Wojcicka 50,000 euros ($77,800) for her starting spot in the race.

BASEBALL Baseball commissioner Bud Selig plans to establish a study group that will examine on-field issues that could include replay, umpires and pace of game. An announcement is expected today.

SOCCER Former Birmingham co-owners David Sullivan and David Gold reportedly offered to buy troubled Premier League club West Ham for 50 million pounds ($86 million) yesterday.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Competition for two goalie spots heats up at junior selection camp

There was no question for team management who are the four best 19-and-under goaltenders in Canada, but a huge decision looms on who are the best two.

Jake Allen, Matt Hackett, Martin Jones and Olivier Roy are in a tight battle at the team selection camp for the two spots for goalies on the Canadian squad that will play at the world junior championship Dec. 26-Jan. 5 in Regina and Saskatoon.

Allen, of the Montreal Juniors, is the front-runner because of his greater national and international experience, but none of the other three can be counted out.

"They've been consistent throughout the year and, in such a short event, consistency is crucial," goaltending coach Ron Tugnutt said yesterday.

"This is going to be a fight to the end for these guys."

Roy, of the Cape Breton Screaming Eagles, is the shootout king. The six-foot-four Jones, of the Calgary Hitmen, has the widest wingspan. And Hackett, of the Plymouth Whalers, has the best regular season numbers among the four.

"We'll discuss them as a group," Tugnutt added. "We're in a good situation."

The four were deemed the best at the end of last season and were the only goalies invited to the Canadian team's summer camp. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Pretty Woman signs up for beauty product line
Julia Roberts, who most famously played a sex-trade worker in the movie Pretty Woman, has been named ambassador for the beauty product line Lancôme. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Health & Beauty

Prescription pain pills killers?

CELIA MILNE
for Metro Canada

They kill pain but they also kill people. A new Canadian study has found that deaths from prescription pain medications are on the rise.

"More people will die from prescription painkillers in 2009 than from H1N1," Dr. Irfan Dhalla told Metro in an email.

Dhalla is lead author of the study and a clinician-scientist at the Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute of St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto. Dhalla and his colleagues examined trends in the prescribing of opioid painkillers in Ontario from 1991 to 2007. Common opioids include Oxycontin, Percocet, Percodan, Tylenol with codeine, Demerol, and morphine. These painkillers are often prescribed for acute pain, such as post-surgery pain or the pain associated with a broken bone. They may be used also for severe chronic pain, such as from some forms of cancer. Doctors are now also prescribing opioids for less-severe pain, such as chronic back pain.

PHOTOS.COM
A new study has shown that perscription pain killers were linked to more deaths than heroin.

When researchers studied data for all deaths from 1991 to 2004, they found that opioid-related deaths doubled in that period, from 13.7 per million in 1991 to 27.2 per million in 2004.

Prescribing of oxycodone — the active ingredient in Oxycontin — has risen very rapidly. From 1999 to 2004, the number of deaths related to oxycodone rose fivefold, says Dhalla.

There are far more deaths in Ontario from prescription painkillers than from heroin or cocaine, noted the study.

Nothing says I love you like a billy goat

When asked what she wanted for Christmas, R&B singer Rihanna told a British television interviewer that she wants some "great food and great sex." The latter may be a little hard to wrap, but how about a gift that may just lead to some greatness in that department?

In his 25 years as a marriage and family therapist in Winnipeg, Dr. Todd Sellick says that the biggest problem couples face when it comes to sex is not knowing each other's fantasies or expectations. That's why he and his wife Jan developed A Private Affair: The Erotic Game of Secrets, Plans & Promises for Couples, a 500-card game that facilitates the sharing of sexual secrets, opinions, and requests among other things. I love that you can play it anywhere, in restaurants, over coffee, while out for a walk, or during car rides, say, en route to the in-laws for Christmas dinner. You're bound to arrive in a good mood. $34.99 Available through aprivateaffairgame.com

If you discover that one of her fantasies is to have a nice, long romantic massage, invest in a set of Swish Massage Candles. The scented candles come in Fig Wood, Amber and Rose Patchouli. The candles melt at low temperature are set in an elegantly stylish porcelain holder designed to let you pour the warm wax on to your hands or directly on to your honey for a soothing and sexy massage. $22 Available at comeasyouare.com.

Nothing symbolizes a solid relationship quite so well as a tree, deepening its roots and growing stronger with each year. Love Trees sends seedlings to schools in Canada so kids can offset your carbon emissions by planting a tree of their own and watching it grow. Available at lovetrees.ca

Express your love for your partner by being selfless. OXFAM Canada has a number of ways you can help others from buying a chicken or a goat for someone in the developing world or by supporting home-based care workers who attend to people suffering from HIV and AIDS. $15 Chicken/$58 Goat/$150 AIDS/HIV home care. Available at oxfamunwrapped.ca

Finally, you don't need to spend a lot of money to come up with a romantic gift for your sweetie. Do what author Ellen Green did. She kept an ongoing list of every sweet, remarkable and unremarkable thing her husband did throughout the year and gave him the list every Valentine's Day. She published the best of 20 years of lists in Remember the Sweet Things: One List, Two Lives, and Twenty Years of Marriage. If you start now, you'll have quite a list by next Christmas.

Josey Vogels is a sex and relationship columnist and author of five books on the subjects. For more info, visit joseyvogels.com.

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Did you know that wearing that attractive smile is more than just cosmetically appealing? It is actually proven that smiling is good for your health. That being the case, it is a wonder more people do not smile more often!

So what causes many people to hide their gorgeous smiles? In many cases, it can be due to dental issues that leave them feeling their smile is unattractive.

For instance, missing teeth can lead to unsightly gaps or crooked teeth. Decay can lead to discolouration that may be unpleasant to the eye. Rather than have these conditions treated by a dentist, many people choose to hide these conditions by simply not smiling. And not smiling can deny these people of other real and important health benefits.

These benefits include:

• Increased self-esteem due to being more attractive themselves and to others;

• A reduction in the level of stress. Stress is associated with high blood pressure and heart conditions. So by smiling, you can actually help your heart and lower your blood pressure at the same time!

Dr. Bao Nguyen
Dental Surgeon

• A strengthened immune system. Stress makes it difficult to relax, but being more relaxed can reduce your chances of developing a cold or the flu. So smile away the common cold!

• Increased levels of endorphins and other natural pain-killers found in our bodies.

Add to that, the fact that smiling makes us look younger, who wouldn't want to smile more!

So if a lost or decayed tooth has robbed you of your desire to flash your brilliant smile, talk to your dentist to help get it back. We understand that you do not want the world to see those spaces, discoloured or crooked teeth.

More importantly, we can help restore that smile.

Dental implants or bridges can be used to replace a missing or badly decayed tooth. Once in place, they can help ensure that your remaining teeth do not become crooked by moving in to fill the gaps. They can also be so natural in appearance, nobody will ever guess you have anything less than a mouth full of healthy teeth!

If your tooth is not so badly decayed that it needs to be removed, a crown may be just what you need. It can allow you to keep the core of your tooth, but provide a healthy, attractive exterior you will be thrilled to show to the world.

Do not allow your dental health to deny you the very real benefits of smiling! Talk to your dentist about dental implants, crowns or bridges and get back that smile you want to show the world this Holiday season! Because smiling is a healthy habit…and healthier habits lead to healthier lives.

Dr. Bao Nguyen
- Dental Surgeon

When healthy eating becomes harmful living

DIETING Healthy eating: Some people take it too far.

When people eliminate large numbers of foods in the name of health and then become obsessive-compulsive about food, this could signal they have a type of eating disorder. Although "healthy eating disorder," or orthorexia nervosa as it is called, is not formally recognized as a mental illness, it does exist and is increasingly being noticed, says Colorado physician Steven Bratman, author of Health Food Junkies. Orthorexia nervosa begins with a desire to avoid foods that are unhealthy. If you have a friend who fits this scenario you should suggest they see a doctor.

CELIA MILNE/METRO CANADA

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News in brief

SNACKS The Centre for Science in the Public Interest recently reviewed movie theatre snacks to see how they rated on the health scsale. It turns out that a large buttered popcorn, a large drink, and some milk chocolate M&M's (150 g) pack quite a punch when it comes to the calories. 2,320 calories and 24 g saturated (bad) fat were found.

CELIA MILNE/METRO CANADA

Food bank help
Loblaw is introducing a new "Extra Helping" logo to be placed in store aisles alongside the food items most needed by the local food bank, such as canned fish or meat, lentils and beans and hot/cold cereal. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Food

Pile up your cone

Cuisipro's newfangled Ice Cream Scoop & Stack creates stackable cylinders for cones as well as "elegant desserts," as the makers say. This is not a quick tool: You shove the scoop into a tub of ice cream, using a pull, twist, push and release sequence to create your cylinder. The results can be fun and colourful though. The Scoop & Stack retails for $19.99 at kitchen shops. It is dishwasher-safe and is available in a variety of colours. For the nearest store, call 1-866-306-3672 (toll-free). TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

A casserole fit for a cowboy

Cowboy Casserole
SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS:
- 1 1/3 lb (600 g) unpeeled baking potatoes, scrubbed and thinly sliced
- 1 1/2 Tbsp (20 mL) olive oil
- 1 tsp (5 mL) tomato paste
- 14 oz (398 mL) can baked beans
- 1/4 lb (125 g) frozen peas
- 1/4 lb (125 g) frozen green beans
- 7 oz (200 g) can corn, drained
- 2 Tbsp (25 mL) barbecue sauce
- 3 1/2 oz (100 g) smoked cheese, roughly chopped

METHOD:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Put potatoes into pot of boiling water. Bring back to boil; half-cover and simmer until just tender, but not breaking up. Drain thoroughly, reserving 4 tbsp (60 mL) cooking water. Tip potatoes into bowl, add oil and toss to coat. Set aside.
2. Blend tomato paste with reserved hot water in pot. Tip in baked beans, peas, green beans, corn and barbecue sauce. Heat gently, stirring, until mixture is barely warm and peas and green beans have thawed. Tip into shallow casserole dish, spreading into even layer. Scatter over cubes of smoked cheese.
3. Arrange potato slices over top, overlapping slightly to completely cover bean and cheese mixture. Bake 30 minutes or until potatoes are tender and top is golden brown.

rd.ca
For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Cowboy casserole from Reader's Digest.

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INGREDIENTS:
Dough
- 1/2 cup + 2 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 4 large eggs
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1-1/2 cups + 2 tbsp granulated sugar
- 1-1/4 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1-1/2 Tbsp ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp each: ground cinnamon, ground nutmeg
- 5 oz (140 g) crystallized ginger, finely chopped (about 1 cup)

Egg Wash
- 1 large egg
- 1 Tbsp milk
- Flour and grease baking sheet

METHOD:
For dough, whisk together oil and eggs in medium bowl until well blended.

In large bowl of stand mixer, whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, ground ginger, cinnamon and nutmeg. Stir in crystallized ginger. Fit mixer with dough hook. Add egg mixture. Mix using stir speed until dough forms into clumpy ball, scraping bowl occasionally.

Turn dough out onto floured work surface. Cut into three equal pieces. Roll and pat each piece into slightly flattened log about 2-1/2 inches wide. Dough is sticky; moisten hands to smooth and adjust dough as needed. Transfer each log onto baking sheet, about 3 inches apart, as dough spreads.

For egg wash, whisk together egg and milk in small bowl. Brush liberally over each log. (You will have some left over).

Bake in centre of preheated 325F oven until golden and just firm when pressed with fingertip, about 40 minutes. Remove from oven. Place pan on rack to cool to room temperature.

Remove each log from pan and cut diagonally into 1/2- to 3/4-inch slices, using serrated knife to prevent breakage. Place no more than 15 slices cut side down on baking sheet lined with parchment.

Bake in centre of preheated 325F oven until golden, about 10 minutes. Repeat with 2 more batches.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

LiquidAssets

Peter Rockwell
metronews.ca/liquidassets

Pour like Santa

Well here we are at the holiday home stretch. Thanks to my wife's expertise in the kitchen — and the central location of the Rockwell mansion — we tend to play host for the big family feast and what seems like a never ending stream of well wishers.

They all arrive thirsty; so finding drinkable wine options that lets you pour like Santa, even though you've spent like Scrooge, is every host's Christmas wish. Since trying to appeal to a variety of personal preferences is never easy I recommend going with a bright, fruity red and a fresh, dry white with an eye on larger format bottles to save a few bucks.

An Aussie shiraz is the quintessential cocktail red (meaning it shines without food) with Lindemans 2008 Bin 50 Shiraz (1500 ml, $22.95 - $24.99) a jammy mix of black raspberry, red licorice and a lingering touch of pepper spice.

For a crisp, straightforward white think Italy and Fontana di Papa's 2008 Colli Albani (1000 ml, $8.35 - $10.79): a classic bargain blend of malvasia and trebbiano that's ripe with refreshing green fruit and tastes best served ice cold right out of the fridge.

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AFI's top 10 movies
The American Film Institute has announced its list of Top 10 movies with honours going to Coraline, The Hangover, The Hurt Locker, The Messenger, Precious, A Serious Man, A Single Man, Sugar, Up and Up in the Air. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Entertainment

Viking voyage
Leonardo DiCaprio is set to star in a film directed by Mel Gibson that's set in the world of Viking culture, Variety reports. The script is by the writer who won an Oscar for The Departed. EW.COM

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

'Strange' job rewarded

Depp collects lifetime achievement award

Hollywood heartthrob Johnny Depp suspects he'll never get used to receiving awards for his acting work.

Depp, best known for his Oscar-nominated role as Captain Jack Sparrow in Disney's Pirates of the Caribbean blockbusters, made the comments Sunday night before receiving a career achievement award at the Bahamas International Film Festival.

"Whenever anybody says they are going to give me some kind of award, I'm always a little stupefied by the notion. The first thing I say is 'why?'," Depp told a small scrum of reporters. "I just go to work like anyone else, except my job happens to be a little stranger."

Lit by cameras during a red carpet event, Depp said he planned on spending Christmas on his private island ringed with white sand off Exuma.

"The place is as close to paradise as anywhere you can get," said Depp, wearing a black pinstriped suit and tinted glasses with heavy black frames.

Fellow acting superstar Sean Connery, who also owns a home in the Bahamas, presented Depp with the award at the Balmoral Club in Nassau.

The festival's founder, Leslie Vanderpool, described Depp as an "icon" who is one of the finest actors of his generation.

"What makes this tribute to Johnny even more special is that he has a home in the Bahamas and possesses a true love and appreciation for the region and culture," Vanderpool said in a statement.

Depp's diverse screen credits through the years include starring roles in Donnie Brasco, Edward Scissorhands, and What's Eating Gilbert Grape.

In September, Disney announced that a new Pirates of the Caribbean film is on the horizon. Depp will reprise his celebrated role as Sparrow in Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides, slated for summer of 2011.

Johnny Depp received a career achievement award at the Bahamas International Film Festival over the weekend.

Depp said he's enjoyed playing all of his screen characters. "I'm still amazed I get jobs after all this time," he quipped.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

L.A. awards go to Mo'Nique, Waltz

MOVIES Mo'Nique has won the supporting-actress award for Precious and Christoph Waltz has earned the supporting-actor prize for Inglourious Basterds from the Los Angeles Film Critics Association.

Mo'Nique won for her role as a hateful welfare mom in Precious. Waltz for his role as a savage Nazi in Inglourious Basterds.

Basterds, Nine lead Critics' Choice pack

MOVIE Inglourious Basterds and Nine lead contenders for the Critics' Choice Movie Awards with 10 nominations each, including best picture.

Other best-picture nominees are Avatar, An Education, The Hurt Locker, Invictus, Precious, A Serious Man, Up and Up in the Air.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kid Rock, Grohl sue bar

Kid Rock and Dave Grohl are suing a small town bar for allegedly jacking their tunes. The two rockers dropped a copyright infringement lawsuit on a Canton, Ohio watering hole because it allegedly didn't have the licensing it needed to play their music. TMZ.COM

DVD picks

Inglourious Basterds

Director: Quentin Tarantino

PURE WISH-FULFILMENT fantasy by Quentin Tarantino (Once upon a time in Nazi-occupied France...), in which Hitler and his stooges stand to get what's coming to them, in a way that makes cinema itself seem like the grand liberator.

Grammatically challenged, factually unhinged and too long for its own good, this World War II thriller nevertheless soars thanks to one glorious performance.

It's not the one you think.

The film's real star is Austria's Christoph Waltz, a multilingual wizard who inhabits the role of Col. Hans Landa, the smirking Gestapo officer known as "The Jew Hunter" for his uncanny sleuthing.

The Hangover

Director: Todd Phillips

A NO-STAR cast takes a shop-worn theme about boys being bad in Las Vegas, and turns it into something fresh, funny and profitable — $277 million US for the domestic market, enough to make it history's most successful "R" rated comedy. Take that, Hollywood know-it-alls!

This is one clever little film. Director Todd Phillips and scripters Jon Lucas and Scott Moore cleverly keep us in suspense about how the monster hangover happened. First they show us the aftermath as three confused groomsmen (Bradley Cooper, Ed Helms and Zach Galifianakis) turn Vegas upside down in their quest for their missing groom (Justin Bartha) after their bachelor party goes hilariously awry.

Peter Howell/for Metro Canada

Oscars extend noms to 10

Academy Awards organizers have shaken up their show by doubling the best-picture category to 10 nominees in hopes of a broader range of films, mainstream movies mixing with the sober dramas that Oscar voters often favour.

The cast of Star Trek, which could be nominated for Best Picture at the upcoming Academy Awards.

The upside: If crowd-pleasers such as Up and Star Trek make the cut, it could give audiences more reason to watch the Oscars, whose ho-hum TV ratings often climb in years when blockbusters are in the running.

The downside: The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences could end up nominating 10 boring movies instead of the usual five, giving fans no new incentive to tune in to a show where rich and famous people spend a long evening patting the backs of other rich and famous people.

"The Academy Awards are very important to the industry because they're a commercial for the business. Every year, they're watched worldwide," said Andrew Kosove, a new academy member and a producer on The Blind Side, the sports-themed drama that's become a surprise box-office smash and has caught some best-picture buzz.

"If all the nominees are films that are artistically wonderful but commercially obscure, what happens is the interest in the show has dissipated, and that's bad for the business."

The show drew its biggest audience for the 1997 awards year, when Titanic swamped the box office with a record $1.8 billion haul worldwide and dominated the Oscars.

On a general decline since, the ratings spiked for the 2003 Oscar year, when the final chapter in the The Lord of the Rings blockbusters swept the awards.

Having 10 best-picture nominees is not unprecedented.

The Golden Globes, whose nominations come out today, have 10 or more best-picture nominees each year, divided into two categories: best drama and best musical or comedy.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Court rules for hospital extension

ASSAULT A British court has ordered a man to remain hospitalized after he admitted assaulting singer Leona Lewis during a book signing session.

Peter Kowalczyk had been charged with punching the pop star in the face as she went to sign his copy of her autobiography in central London on Oct. 14.

Kowalczyk pleaded guilty to common assault. A judge ordered the 29-year-old to remain in the hospital under mental health laws.

Prosecutor Melanie Lee, reading out a witness statement by Lewis, said Monday the singer felt completely devastated by the attack. In the statement Lewis says: "Now I am very frightened about going out in public."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kenya's Style

Kenya Hunt

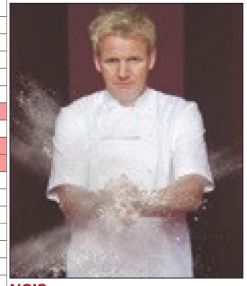
Exclusively at metronews.ca/globalstyle

DT	Vu	SC	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
12/15/09 primetime	265	353	2	TVO	Parks	Recreat. Eden	The Agenda With Steve Paikin		East West 101 (N)		Science and Islam (N)		Agenda-Paikin
	211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	NCIS "Faith" (HDTV) (N)		Gordon Ramsay: Cook		The Good Wife (N)		News Final
	-	-	5	SRC	Martin sur la route (N) (SC)		15 ans de Petite Vie (N) (SC)		Le Grand Rire 2009 (N) (SC)		Le Téléjournal Nouvelles. (SC)		La Zone (SC)
	209	342	6	CHRO	Degrassi: TNG	TMZ (N)	*Lies My Mother Told Me* (2005, Docudrama), Colm Feore				Stargate Atlantis (DVS)		Comedy Now
	196	311	7	CTV	etalk	Access H.	So You Think You Can Dance		Flashpoint		Flashpoint		CTV News
	208	303	8	CBC	Wheel Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Xmas Carol	Frosty Returns	Legend of Frosty		CBC News: The National		The Hour
	-	360	9	NBC	Wheel Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	The Sing-Off Two groups leave. (N)				The Jay Leno Show (N)		News
	117	713	10	TVA	Qui perd gagne pour Noël		*Et si c'était vrai* ★★ (2005, Com. Sentimentale), Donal Logue				TVA nouvelles	(10:45) Juste pour rire (SC)	
	-	-	11	QS	Touche pas à mon fils		Dirty Sexy Money (SC)		Pratique privée (N) (SC)		Guerre clans	L'Attaque à 5 (N)	
	137	763	12	TFO	Panorama		Un monde de passions		*Le Lieu du crime* ★★ (1986, Drame)			Villages	Méga constr.
	-	362	13	CBS	The Insider (N)	Judge Brown	NCIS "Faith" (HDTV) (N)		NCIS: Los Angeles (N)		The Good Wife (N)		Two/Half Men
	216	395	14	OMN2	Family Guy	The Simpsons	Omni News: S. Asian Edition		Omni News: Cantonese Edition		Two/Half Men	King/Queens	Cold Case
	214	344	15	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Scrubs (HDTV)		Scrubs	Better Off Ted	The Jay Leno Show (N)		News
	115	343	16	CFMT	Two/Half Men	The Office	Omni News: Italian Edition (N)		Vivere V	Omni News:	Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Metropia
	218	345	18	CHCH	*All I Want for Christmas* ★★ (1991, Drama) Ethan Randall.				*Grease 2* ★★ (1982, Musical Comedy) Maxwell Caulfield.				News at 11 (N)
	-	361	20	ABC	Action News	Entertainment	A Charlie Brown Christmas		Scrubs	Better Off Ted	the forgotten (HDTV)		News
	512	396	24	CPAC	(3) Dossier public (SC)		Heure polit.	L'Heure politique				Tête-à-tête	Podium
	651	355	25	CTS	Little House on the Prairie		Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman		100 Huntley Street		Life Today	This Is Day	John Hagee
	-	365	36	FOX	TMZ (N)	Seinfeld	So You Think You Can Dance		Gordon Ramsay: Cook		FOX 2 News (N)		News
	-	-	64	PBS	Business Rpt.	Whiz Quiz	Nova (DVS)		Frontline "From Jesus to Christ: The First Christians"				Charlie Rose
	205	312	104	CTV	etalk	Access H.	So You Think You Can Dance		Flashpoint		Flashpoint		CTV News
news	502	390	26	NW	Connect Today's biggest stories. (N)				CBC News: The National		CBC News: the fifth estate		National
	500	500	33	CNN	CNN Tonight (N)		Campbell Brown (N)		Larry King Live (N)		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
sports	406	417	27	net	Best Damn Top 50 Special		Salt Lake	MMA Conn	Olympics: Away From Home		Sportsnet Connected		Prime Time
	126	730	28	RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes		Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI économie	Le National	Le Téléjournal
	400	280	30	TSN	That's Hockey!	NBA Basketball Toronto Raptors at Miami Heat. (HDTV) (Live)					Women's Hockey Canada vs. United States.		
	410	403	52	SCR	Cabby Unlimit	Score Today	Court Surfing NBA news, scores and highlights.						Score Now
family	411	457	56	OLN	Ghost Hunters International		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman		Ghost Hunters International		Bounty Hunter
	417	406	59	SC	Pass Time	Pass Time	Monster Jam (HDTV)		Super Bikes!	Super Bikes!	Dangerous Drives (HDTV)		Pass Time
	554	544	48	TEL	Scooby-Doo	Total Drama	Total Drama	6TEEN	Futurama	King of the Hill	American Dad	Futurama	Robot Chicken
	557	540	51	FAM	Sonny Chance	Zack & Cody	Overruled!	Han. Montana	Wizards-Place	Latest Buzz	Ned's School	Cory in House	That's-Raven
	551	542	65	YTV	OddParents	Flintstone Xms	Malcolm-Mid.	Fresh Prince	8 Simple Rules	What I Like	Family Biz	Prank Patrol	Adrenaline Proj
cable variety	570	580	29	MM	The Daily Fix		Ranked!		I Want to Work for Diddy		Entourage	Wild 'n Out	mmtop10.ca
	615	520	31	A&E	Criminal Minds (HDTV)		Criminal Minds (HDTV)		Psychic Kids: Paranormal		Paranormal State (N)		Paranormal
	628	584	32	SPKE	UFC Fight Night						Most Shocking Moments		Shocking
	521	560	34	TLC	Crazy Christmas Lights		Table for 12	Table for 12	Kids-Counting	18 Kids-Count	Little Couple	Little Couple	Table for 12
	145	761	35	TV5	Zoom animal		*Figaro* (2008, Drame) Isabelle Adjani.			Cadeau	Avenirs	Hors série	TV5 Le Journal
	616	521	39	SHO	The Outer Limits		*A Woman's Rage* (2008, Suspense) Brandy Ledford.				Bones		NCIS
	620	523	40	BVO	Quartet Plus Four at Christmas		Christmas at the Concert Hall		Johnny Cash Christmas		Johnny Cash Christmas		Law & Order
	520	505	42	DIS	Daily Planet (N)		How It's Made	How It's Made	Destroyed	Destroyed	Time Warp (N)		Daily Planet
	575	583	43	CMT	Amer. Funniest Home Videos		Reba	Reba	According-Jim	According-Jim	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Donner Down
	601	562	45	SLC	Rich Bride, Poor Bride		Wedding SOS	Wedding SOS	Wedding SOS	Wedding SOS	Bulging Brides	Bulging Brides	ET Canada
	625	548	46	COM	Air Farce	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	Name Is Earl	The Simpsons	South Park	Jeff Dunham	Blue Collar TV	Daily Show
	294	529	47	TBS	Family Guy	Family Guy	House-Payne	House-Payne	Law & Order: SVU		*Runaway Bride* (1999, Romance-Comedy)		
	600	564	49	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	HGTV's Top 10	Design Inc.	Pure Design	Genevieve	House Hunters	House Hunters	Holmes-Homes
	627	528	50	SPC	Stargate Atlantis (DVS)		Star Trek: Voyager		Medium (HDTV) (N)		Fringe "Grey Matters"		InnerSpace (N)
	581	566	53	MTV	Peak Season	After	Catching Up: Teen Mom		Teen Mom		Teen Mom (N)		MTV Live
	618	524	54	TROP	'70s Show	'70s Show	The Outer Limits		ET Canada	Switch	Family Guy	'70s Show	'70s Show
	522	506	55	HIS	Ancient Discoveries		Cities of the Underworld		Cities of the Underworld		Ultimate Engineering		Crime Stories
	129	773	60	CD	Biographies "Adam Sandler"		Mayday "Le Tueur invisible"		Images-chocs		Les Procureurs		Leçon d'anat
	261	394	61	V	Murder, She Wrote		Hallelujah	Dinnerladies	*The Christmas Wish* ★★ (1998, Drama) Neil Patrick Harris.				Gospel Chal
	602	567	62	W	*Holiday Wishes* (2006, Drama) Amber Benson.				*Eve's Christmas* (2004, Comedy-Drama) Elisa Donovan.				Grocery Bag
	269	350	70	APTN	Fish Out	Mixed Blessing	Cashing In	Rabbit Fall	Blackfly	Moose TV	Rez Rides	Moccasin Flats	Short Cuts
	621	527	71	TLK	Look-A-Like	TMZ	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		The View (HDTV) (N)		The Dr. Oz Show (N)		TMZ
	603	561	95	FN	Ricardo	Exotic	Restaurant Makeover		The F Word (N)		Good Eats	Good Eats	Iron Chef Am.

critics' corner

Gordon Ramsay: Cookalong Live

Known as much for his temper as his culinary skills, the famed chef shows a friendlier side in this one-hour special as he provides instructions for cooking a three-course meal. On the menu: angel hair pasta with shrimp, chili peppers and tomatoes; steak Diane with sauteed potatoes and peas; and a quick tiramisu for dessert. 9 PM on 3 GTV 36 FOX



NCIS

When the enlisted son of a retired colonel-turned-preacher is found dead, the team thinks he may be the victim of a hate crime. At home, Gibbs tries to get to the reason behind his father's recent change in behavior while the latter is visiting in the new episode "Faith." 8 PM on 13 CBS 3 GTV

The Good Wife

A judge known for handing down questionable sentences overturns a simple plea deal arranged by Alicia, causing her to question his motives. Will is delighted when Diane receives an offer she can't refuse in the new episode "Lifeguard." 10 PM on 13 CBS 3 GTV

Actor needs kidney transplant

Grizzwald Chapman, known to most as Tracy Morgan's sidekick on NBC's 30 Rock, is in dire need of a kidney transplant, the actor has revealed during a taping of The Dr. Oz Show. POPEATER.COM

Pushing boundaries

'I'm going to make all my movies in 3-D:' Cameron

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News

Nearly 15 years after he originally conceived of the project and after more than four years of development, James Cameron finally brings his epic Avatar to the screen. The film explores an alien culture through the eyes of Jake (Sam Worthington), a marine who falls in love with Neytiri (Zoe Saldana), one of the natives on the alien planet Pandora. We caught up with Cameron in London to discuss the massive undertaking that is Avatar, pushing the boundaries of 3-D technology and a possible sequel.

Q How important was it to push the boundaries of 3-D filmmaking with this project?

A Up until now, every filmmaker who's made a 3-D film has really felt it incumbent upon themselves to constantly remind you that you're watching a 3-D movie. It's usually things that are floating or poking out of the screen. If I'm constantly reminding you that you're watching a 3-D movie, then you're constantly sitting there reminded that you're in a movie theatre.

So we approached the 3-D as if it were a window, or a portal into a reality. We didn't look for opportunities to constantly exercise our 3-D muscle in front of you. Maybe one thing that Avatar can achieve is to become an example of a mature use of stereoscopic 3-D.

Let it move out of its adolescence into a mature acceptance as just part of the cinematic art by serious filmmakers. I don't have a problem with that. I'm going to make all my movies in 3-D, no matter what the subject matter.

But Avatar is also being released in 2-D.

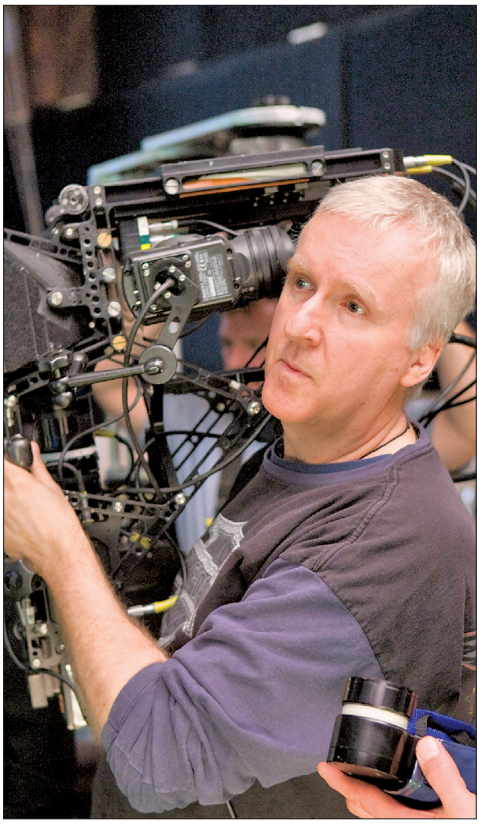
Q We try not to make the film a 3-D film first. With some 3-D movies, you watch them in 2-D and there's a shot of a spear sticking out of the screen that they hold on for 10 seconds.

It's all sorts of fun in 3-D, but in 2-D it looks like the stupidest edit in the world. So we wanted to make sure we weren't doing that sort of thing. We're very proud of the 2-D version of the film we've put out. But it really comes down to consumer choice. I think of the 3-D as the premium experience of the film and the 2-D as the excellent base-level presentation of the film.

Q At the same time, there are strong environmental and political messages in the film. How did you work those in?

A I think it's less an intellectual message and more something you feel emotionally. I wanted people to feel the environmental message, not think about it, not have it droning on as information.

It's kind of the exact opposite of An Inconvenient Truth, with the bar graphs and all that. In an adventure film, it's more important to get these concepts viscerally. Historically, the kind of science fiction that I grew up on had a message. Usually it was a dystopian message, usually it was in the form of some kind of warning. And as much as I loved Star Wars, it was a moment in history when science fiction became more escapist fantasy and less a kind of intellectual medium. Avatar is an attempt to merge science fiction back to its roots of having a warning.



More than four years in making, James Cameron's Avatar promises to combine the best of technology and storytelling.

Avatar opens in theatres on Friday

Q The Na'vi language is very complex. How was it developed?

A It started off innocently enough as I was writing the script. I was just sort of free-associating. And when I found Dr. Paul Frommer, who is the head of the linguistics department at USC in Los Angeles, he started to riff on that. He wanted to find things that the actors could still pronounce, but which would sound a little bit alien to our ear — at least in terms of European-based cultures. So he went to Indonesian sounds and bushmen clicks, things like that.

Q Is there going to be a sequel?

A I have it mapped out ... It all depends on whether we do well with the first film. But that was certainly the intention from the beginning. When I pitched this... I said, "You know, we're going to have spend a lot of money and time and energy. So it really makes sense to think of it as the potential start of a franchise." We used to joke that we'd cut to 10 years later, and Jake's kind of fat, sitting on the couch in a palm tree, and he's like, "Hey, honey, get me a beer." And Neytiri says, "Get your own beer!"

MTV finds Teen Wolf actors
MTV has cast four actors in its upcoming Teen Wolf series, a re-imagining of the 1985 movie starring Michael J. Fox: Tyler Posey, Tyler Hoechlin, Crystal Reed and Dylan O'Brien will appear in the new version. EW.COM

In hip hop, Drake's best we ever had

Toronto rapper's got massive buzz

Toronto hip-hop artists Drake has had made a dizzying ascent in the rap world — and he's done it without having released a proper album.

On his hit single Best I Ever Had, Canadian rapper Drake bragged that he had "buzz so big, I could probably sell a blank disc."

And in a way, he has done just that.

The Toronto hip-hop star has had made a dizzying ascent in the rap world — and he's done it without having released a proper album.

He has three top 20 singles in the U.S. and two Grammy nominations, he's collaborated with Jay-Z, Kanye West and Eminem, and he even had to shoot down rumours of a relationship with Barbadian pop star Rihanna (poor guy).

In a matter of months, he's become one of Canada's most prominent hip-hop exports ever, and one question remains: How did the former Degrassi star go from the cosy environs of Toronto's wealthy Forest Hill enclave to hanging around with Lil Wayne?

"You know what, I'll tell you honestly: it's the hustle and the drive," Toronto hip-hop artist Kardinal Offishall told The Canadian Press in a recent interview.

"I've seen Drake from a few years ago to where he's at now. It's not just because Lil Wayne picked him up or because he had an Internet buzz. I've seen him literally give it everything that he had, 150,000 per cent, in order to make it."

And make it he has.

Born Aubrey Drake Graham in Memphis to a black father and a white Jewish mother, Drake moved to Toronto as a child after his parents divorced.

He got his big break in 2001 at the age of 14 when he was cast on Degrassi: The Next Generation as Jimmy Brooks, a high-school basketball star who eventually surrenders his hoop dreams after being shot in the back, leaving him confined to a wheelchair.

In 2006, Drake self-published his first mixtape, Room for Improvement. That led to Replacement Girl, his collaboration with Virginia R&B croon-

"It's the hustle and the drive. It's not just because Lil Wayne picked him up or because he had an Internet buzz. I've seen him literally give it everything that he had, 150,000 per cent, in order to make it."
Kardinal Offishall

er Trey Songz that was the lead single on Drake's 2007 mixtape, Comeback Season, and which caught the attention of New Orleans rapper Lil Wayne.

Soon, Drake was tucked under Weezy's wing, riding shotgun with a rapper on the cusp of superduperstardom.

In 2008, Lil Wayne's Tha Carter III went platinum in a week and went on to sell more copies than any other album that year. In September '08, the rapper stepped onstage at the MTV Video Music Awards for a collaboration with Leona Lewis and T-Pain.

Shirtless and behind heavy dark shades, Lil Wayne crept down a staircase and rapped a verse that actually wasn't his. Lines like "I'm losing my mind like: 'Damn where my roof just go?' Top slipped off like Janet at the Super Bowl" actually belonged to Drake, then still a mostly unknown MC.

And when Lewis launched into the song's hook (from Nina Simone's Please Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood), Lil Wayne gave credit where it was due, rasping overtop: "Drizzy Drake, I love you boy!"

A few months after that high-profile endorsement, Drake dropped his next mixtape, So Far Gone, to almost unprecedented buzz for an emerging artist.

Drake was Weezy's protege and showed the influence of Wayne's mischievous, meticulous rhymes. But he arguably owed more to Kanye West, with his exploration of the space between swagger and self-criticism and his unfailing ear for melody.

The mixtape's swooning single Best I Ever Had was a perfect showcase, with Drake crooning the ballad's hook and rapping its intermittently sweet lyrics ("Sweat pants, hair tied, chillin' with no makeup on/ That's when you're the prettiest, I hope that you don't take it wrong").

The song went to No. 2 on the U.S. charts. Drake, still without a record label or official album, became the target of a major-label bidding war (Lil Wayne's Cash Money Records, under the Universal umbrella, ultimately won).

Drake began crafting his album debut, Thank Me Later, scheduled for the first quarter of 2010.

Meantime, his songs continued to get major airplay on both sides of the border. "Drake knows how to write records that are about big ideas," Washington rapper Wale.

"Look at the names of his songs: Fear, Forever, Winner. Those are big ideas."

Toronto-raised hip-hop artist K'naan was more blunt: "He's very good." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sags win out over scalpels

Dame Judi Dench feels "too old" for cosmetic surgery. The 75-year-old actress admits she hates getting older but worries she has left it too late to alter her appearance, femalefirst.co.uk reports. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Lindsay in the Twitter

THINK BEFORE YOU TWEET Lindsay Lohan's habitual Twittering may have brought an early end to her trip to India for aid work and a BBC documentary. "Over 40 children saved so far within one day's work. This is what life is about," Lohan posted to her profile, referring to a raid in New Delhi that that saved children being held captive in workshops. "She did not say she was present at the raid, this is a misinterpretation," a rep for the BBC tells the Daily Telegraph. "She was merely referring to a raid that happened connected to child trafficking." METRO NEWS SERVICES

Chace's woes

POOR PRETTY BOY Chace Crawford hated being a model, femalefirst.co.uk reports. The Gossip Girl actor says he didn't enjoy being a model but knows his good looks have helped him in his career. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Jude and Sienna shack up

HERE WE GO AGAIN Jude Law, 36, and Sienna Miller, 27, are moving in together, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The pair — who have rekindled their romance after splitting up in 2006 when the actor had an affair with his children's nanny — are so "in love" they are now looking to buy a new London pad early next year so they can be together all the time.

A source told Britain's The Sun newspaper, "Last week they put the wheels in motion to live together again. They have told staff that they are in love and will be moving back to London in the spring and they will be living together as a couple once again."

The on-and-off couple grew close again recently when they both starred in separate Broadway shows in New York at the same time, Jude appearing in Hamlet and Sienna in Miss Julie.

The pair were recently spotted leaving Law's New York apartment together, sparking rumours of a reconciliation.

They first met on the set of Alfie in 2004.

The source added, "Jude was reluctant at first for anything to happen. But Sienna convinced him that she was still in love with him." METRO NEWS SERVICES

Taylor Swift gives big bucks

BIRTHDAY BONUS SCHOOLS Taylor Swift is no longer a teen. The country superstar marked turning 20 with a Christmas-themed birthday party for friends, her band and her tour crew at her family's home in Hendersonville, Tenn, people.com reports.

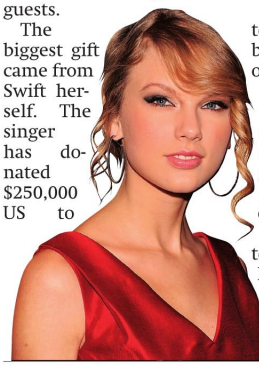
"It's more like an end-of-year Christmas party that happens to be on my birthday," says Swift, who spent the night before at home, baking butter cookies and gingerbread cookies with cream-cheese icing for her guests.

The biggest gift came from Swift herself. The singer has donated $250,000 US to schools around the country that she's either attended or worked with.

The money will pay teachers' salaries as well as buy books and fund various educational programs.

"Something I wanted to do at the end of this amazing year and especially on my birthday was give back to something I really believe in, which is education," says Swift.

"The schools that I went to and the amazing people I got to learn from really turned me into who I am, and I wanted to give back." METRO NEWS SERVICES



Michelle has her secrets

SHE DOESN'T KISS AND TELL Michelle Rodriguez is tired of having to respond to questions about her sexuality. "If I wanted to tell people what I do … I'd have made a sex video a long time ago," the Avatar star says, who has been rumoured to be lesbian or bisexual according to Showbiz Spy. "Largely, people don't know the whole story about anything. But still they need to put a name on it so they can label it and put it on the side and not dedicate any time to figuring it out. It's laziness." METRO WORLD NEWS

Celebrity tweets

LL Cool J is not a fan of rocking, Demi Moore can't stand the rain, Yoko Ono wants you to start small and Neil Diamond does the holidays big-time.

- @llcoolj Do not confuse motion and progress. A rocking horse keeps moving but does not make any progress.
- @mrskutcher Trying to holiday shop in the pouring rain....bah humbug!
- @yokoono Give up meat one day and then two days maybe. It's a very, very intelligent idea.
- @NeilDiamond Sang for the President and Mrs. Obama last night. Terrific. Wished them a Merry Christmas and a Happy Chanukah.

METRO WORLD NEWS

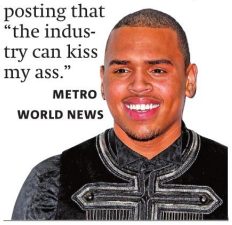
Richie goes dark

BRUNETTE IS BEST On Saturday, Nicole Richie debuted a darker do, usmagazine.com reports.

"I hadn't done it in about two years," the mother-of-two, 28, told usmagazine.com. "So I was just ready and sick of being blonde." METRO NEWS SERVICES

Brown hits back

RETAIL RETALIATION After hearing reports from his Twitter followers that retail managers around the country had been refusing to stock his new album, Chris Brown shot back, posting that "the industry can kiss my ass." METRO WORLD NEWS



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metro

Brand picks up a ring

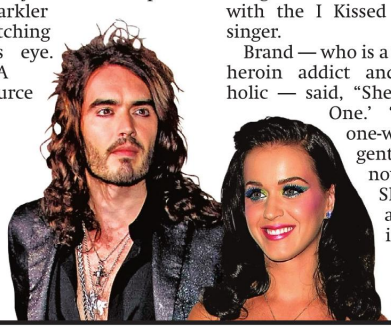
HE KISSED A GIRL Russell Brand has been shopping for a diamond ring — sparking rumours he is going to propose to girlfriend Katy Perry, people.com reports.

The British comic star was photographed looking at bands at exclusive London jewellers Cartier on Friday with one specific sparkler catching his eye. A source said, "His face lit up when he saw this one particular diamond ring.

He put it on his ring finger and gazed at it for ages."

Russell, 34, has been dating Katy, 25, since September and it looks as though he is ready to turn his back on his womanizing ways for good and settle down with the I Kissed a Girl singer.

Brand — who is a former heroin addict and alcoholic — said, "She's 'The One.' "I'm a one-woman gentleman now. She's amazing." METRO NEWS SERVICES



Garth is a such a romantic

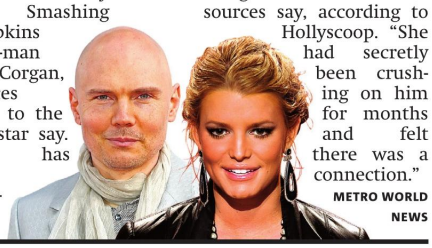
I'M LOVIN' IT? As far as anniversaries go, Garth Brooks and Trisha Yearwood must have to be "lovin' it," people.com reports.

Brooks, who came out of retirement and officially began his five-year run of shows at Wynn Las Vegas on Saturday, had a fancy dinner planned to celebrate his fouth anniversary with Yearwood, but suddenly that meal became McDonald's French fries.

"That was our anniversary dinner," he told reporters. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Jessica has 'fallen for Billy'

ODDEST COUPLE EVER Though she's said to be taking it slow, Jessica Simpson is totally smitten with Smashing Pumpkins front-man Billy Corgan, sources close to the pop star say. "She has completely fallen for Billy and his easygoing, smart attitude. She says she wants to take things a lot further," sources say, according to Hollyscoop. "She had secretly been crushing on him for months and felt there was a connection." METRO WORLD NEWS



The Weather Network ©The Weather Network 2009

Today Rain and snow 70% 1° / -14°

Wednesday Sunny -10° / -19°

Thursday Sunny -14° / -21°

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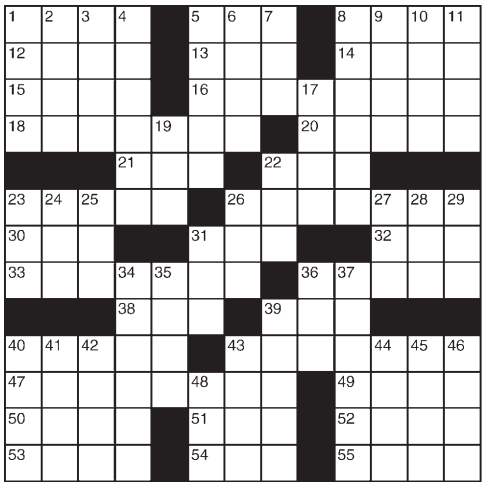
Take Five



ACROSS

1 Initial stake
5 Resort
8 Obama's predecessor
12 — -garou (werewolf)
13 Sept. preceder
14 "Do — others ..."
15 Choir member
16 Pop-up's opposite
18 More healthy
20 Urban disturbances
21 "Of course"
22 21-Across, at the altar
23 Bard's creations
26 Cad
30 Resistance measure
31 Pistol
32 Actress Gardner
33 Sledgehammer, e.g.
36 Red Sea nation
38 Lubricate
39 Swindle
40 Disco-style
43 Creator of a company
47 Flatfish
49 Modern coin
50 Carry on
51 Greek H
52 "— Karenina"
53 Harem rooms
54 Nev. neighbor
55 "Monopoly" card

DOWN

1 "Woe is me!"
2 — contendere
3 Ballerina's frill
4 Namesake of a sort
5 Wise ones
6 Kitten's call
7 Past
8 Toe woe
9 Loosen
10 Cancel a dele
11 — d'oeuvres
17 Asian language
19 — Moines
22 Charged bit
23 Burst
24 Cry of discovery
25 Ostrich's cousin
26 Botanical prickle
27 Hoover, for one
28 First lady
29 Sprinted
31 Come together
34 Reason for a lack of glory?
35 "My Heart Will Go On" singer
36 Second person
37 Group of nine
39 Reef material
40 Frizzy hairstyle
41 Pleased
42 Chaplin widow
43 Crumbly cheese
44 Sand formation
45 Sea eagle
46 Street
48 Calendar abbr.

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

4		3				1		8
	9		1		8		5	
7			5		9			2
		8	3		5	4		
		9	6		4	3		
8			2		7			6
	1		4		6		3	
5		7				8		4

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

B	A	C	H	■	S	A	Y	■	S	C	U	M		
E	U	R	O	■	O	D	E	■	T	A	R	O		
E	R	O	S	■	C	O	L	L	A	R	D	S		
F	A	C	T	O	R	■	P	O	R	O	U	S		
■	■	■	E	R	A	S	■	G	E	L	■	■		
C	O	L	L	A	T	E	D	■	R	I	C	O		
A	N	A	■	L	I	N	E	S	■	N	O	W		
P	E	N	S	■	C	O	L	L	A	G	E	N		
■	■	C	C	I	■	R	I	O	T	■	■	■		
S	H	E	A	R	S	■	V	E	T	O	E	D		
C	O	L	L	A	P	S	E	■	E	R	G	O		
O	B	O	E	■	E	E	R	■	S	C	A	N		
T	O	T	S	■	W	A	Y	■	T	A	N	S		

7	4	3	1	6	5	8	2	9
1	2	6	9	8	4	7	5	3
9	5	8	7	2	3	4	6	1
3	8	9	6	4	2	1	7	5
5	1	4	8	3	7	2	9	6
6	7	2	5	9	1	3	4	8
8	3	5	4	7	6	9	1	2
2	6	7	3	1	9	5	8	4
4	9	1	2	5	8	6	3	7

On the web

For more games and 60 additional daily cartoon strips, visit metronews.ca

Metro Recipe of the Day

Seafood and Bacon Paella

INGREDIENTS:

2 tbsp (25 ml) olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 green pepper, chopped
2 large garlic cloves, chopped
7 oz (200 g) bacon, chopped
1 large tomato, chopped
1 1/3 cups (325 ml) paella rice
1/2 tsp (2 ml) saffron threads, crushed
5 cups (1.25 l) hot chicken stock
14 oz (400 g) frozen cooked seafood mix

METHOD:

1. Heat oil in large, nonstick frying pan. Add onion, pepper, garlic and bacon pieces, and cook over gentle heat 5 minutes. Add tomato and cook 2 minutes.
2. Add rice and stir to coat in oil. Add saffron threads and heat for a few seconds, then pour in hot stock. Bring to boil, then stir lightly and simmer 5 minutes.
3. Mix in frozen seafood, return to gentle simmer and cook until rice is tender and liquid absorbed, stirring occasionally. Serve.

SERVES 4

rd.ca

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton sallybrompton.com

For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES ♈
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
Ignore your critics and do what you think is best. It might be an idea in future to keep your plans to yourself so others don't get the chance to poke their noses in.

TAURUS ♉
APRIL 21-MAY 21
The Sun in Sagittarius at this time of year tends to make you anxious but if you think about it you will realize you've got precious little to worry about.

GEMINI ♊
MAY 22-JUNE 21
You may think you know all there is to know about someone you love but they will do something today that makes you realize you don't know it all.

CANCER ♋
JUNE 22-JULY 22
The Sun may be transiting the work area of your chart at the moment but you don't have to do everything yourself.

LEO ♌
JULY 23-AUG 23
You won't lack for confidence today but what about common sense? If you take foolish risks no amount of confidence will save you.

VIRGO ♍
AUG 24-SEPT 22
Minor disagreements could easily get out of hand today, so promise yourself now that no matter what anyone says to you you won't rise to the bait.

LIBRA ♎
SEPT 23-OCT 23
There is no point blaming other people if something does not go right for you. Look at your own performance first and resist the urge to pass the buck.

SCORPIO ♏
OCT 24-NOV 22
Don't waste money on things you don't really need. Something may be bright and shiny and catch your fancy today but what good would it do you?

SAGITTARIUS ♐
NOV 23-DEC 21
Your energy levels may be high but you seem unable to decide what you should be doing with it all. But who says you have to do anything?

CAPRICORN ♑
DEC 22-JAN 20
You may be rather fearful at the moment but it won't be long before you are feeling better.

AQUARIUS ♒
JAN 21-FEB 18
Sometimes it pays to be blunt and this may be one of those times. Others won't mind your forthright language so long as they understand it.

PISCES ♓
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Keep a cool head today because something is going to happen that has others running around like it's the end of the world.

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This day in history

1939: Gone with the Wind received its première at Loew's Grand Theater in Atlanta, Ga., USA.
1978: President Jimmy Carter announces that the United States will recognize the People's Republic of China and cut off all relations with Taiwan.
1997: The Treaty of Bangkok is signed allowing the transformation of Southeast Asia into a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone.
2001: The Leaning Tower of Pisa reopens after 11 years and $27,000,000 US to fortify it, without fixing its famous lean.
2005: Argentina's president Néstor Kirchner announces the early repayment of its external debt to the IMF.

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Breakfast • Luxe island view rm.
Jan. 9, 16 & 23 • 1 wk.
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Studio suite
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+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $223

The Alexandra • 3 1/2★
Garden view deluxe studio
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$1329
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $223

Saint Lucia via Montreal

Almond Morgan Bay • 4★
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Jan. 11, 18 & 25 • 1 wk.
$1729
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $235

Barbados via Toronto

Bougainvillea Beach Resort • 4★
Deluxe studio
Feb. 2, 3, 9, 10 & 16 • 1 wk.
$1569
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $87

Nassau, Bahamas via Toronto

Sheraton Nassau Beach Resort • 4★
Resortview rm.
Feb. 2, 9, 10, 16 • 3 nts.
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+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $96

Saint Lucia via Montreal

Coconut Bay Beach Resort & Spa • 4★
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Deluxe gardenview rm.
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PRIVILEGES
$1449
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $235

Almond Casuarina Beach Resort • 4★
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Kingston
Cataraqui Town Centre
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764 Gardiners Rd.
131 Princess St.
Nepean
129 RioCan Ave.
39 Robertson Rd.
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